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GOD AND THE UNIVERSE
IN THE
VEDĀNTIC THEOLOGY
OF
RĀMANUJA

A study in his use of the Self-Body Analogy

ERIC J. LOTT

With a Foreword by
NINIAN SMART

RĀMANUJA RESEARCH SOCIETY

20, HURKUT ROAD, MADRAS-600017 (SOUTH INDIA)

1976

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TO THE MEMORY OF MY MOTHER

FOREWORD

By

NINIAN SMART

Professor of Religious Studies in the University of Lancaster

Rāmānuja is, in a way, the Thomas Aquinas of India. Or to put it otherwise, Aquinas is the Rāmānuja of Italy. Rāmānuja is the great theologian of analogy, even if, unlike Aquinas, he was a critic, not so much a generator, of arguments for the existence of God. Grace abounds, so to say: he is also relevant, from a Christian point of view, to Protestant theology. More vitally, he is the greatest exponent of Hindu theism, and the greatest philosopher of *bhakti*.

Eric Lott is a fine guide to Rāmānuja's theism, and he concentrates upon the analogy of the self-body relationship between God and the cosmos. It is an analogy which seems to me of vital import to all theists, whether Hindu or Christian; and I consider that it is a good way, perchance the best way, of explaining both the transcendence and immanence of God. It is, however, an analogy which has led relatively ignorant Western writers to think of Rāmānuja as a pantheist. This is nonsense as the present book shows; and it is nonsense because Rāmānuja is very strong on the dependence of the cosmos on the Lord. It is not that the cosmos and God are identical, as pantheism would imply. For me, Rāmānuja's doctrine is the heart of Vedānta, and a clear expression of the real concerns of the *Brahmasūtra*. He is thus a theistic successor of the *bhedābhedavāda*. In any event he deserves research and depth of investigation. I was very happy indeed to be involved in advising Eric Lott in his earlier enquiries, and I hope this book has wide and effective circulation, as it deserves.

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

Our Research Society was established 10 years ago with the specific object of publishing all the important and classical works of Viśiṣṭādvaita Philosophy and Religion by well known and accredited scholars.

Our first publication was on Yamuna's Agamapramāṇyam - a classic with text and translation and introduction by the internationally well-known scholar Dr. J. A. B. Van Buitenen of Chicago University. This has been appreciatively reviewed by the Punjab University Magazine and has been bought by almost all College Libraries and University Libraries over India, in addition to libraries in U.S.A. and Europe.

Our second publication was on Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy and religion - a symposium of 30 essays by 24 erudite scholars. This book had an excellent reception not only in India but also in Europe and U.S.A. Libraries.

We are now publishing as the third book in this series "GOD AND THE UNIVERSE IN THE VEDĀNTIC THEOLOGY OF RĀMĀNUJA" which is a thesis prepared by Eric. J. Lott of Secunderabad, who is not only a deep scholar but also a great authority in all the six darsanas. This thesis is a most important aspect of our Viśiṣṭādvaita Philosophy and religion and we are deeply thankful to Prof. Lott for entrusting the publication of this thesis to our Research Society.

A book on "Ramanuja's idea of the Finite self" by Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari and another book on the "Wisdom of the Upaniṣads" - a book explaining the standpoint of Viśiṣṭādvaita interpretation in the modern philosophical language of Ontology, Epistemology and other titles are now in the press. Both these books will be published before the end of this year.

Madras

13-4-1976 Tamil New Year's day.

V. SRINIVASA RAGHAVAN

Honorary Secretary.

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

My interest in Rāmānuja was first aroused in 1958, while studying theology at London University (Richmond College). Zaehner's *At Sundry Times* was undoubtedly a major factor in this attraction to Rāmānuja, even though Zaehner was not entirely fair to him in that particular book. Perhaps a more important influence at that time was having Ninian Smart as one of my teachers in the philosophy of religion. Few teachers of religion combine such incisive thinking with such an extensive and appreciative understanding of other religious traditions. I am greatly indebted to him for so much in my approach to the study of Rāmānuja and specifically grateful for his having consented to write a foreword to this book.

Since coming to India in 1959, as a lecturer in Indian religion and Christian theology in Andhra Christian Theological College, there has been ample opportunity for me to indulge my interest in Indian religious thought in general and Rāmānuja in particular. Most of my classes have been in Telugu medium, which has been an added help in getting to grips with Indian religious categories. Sanskrit study, begun in 1964 and continued intermittently ever since, further consolidated my Viśiṣṭādvaita interest. A four-term period of research under Ninian Smart in 1969-70, by then Professor of Religious Studies at Lancaster University, gave me the opportunity to clarify and articulate some of my ideas on Rāmānuja. This book is based largely on the research done at that time.

I am grateful to the Methodist Missionary Society, London, for having supported me during my various periods of post-graduate study; to Sri V. Srinivasa Raghavan, Honorary Secretary of the Rāmānuja Research Society, Madras, whose unflagging zeal for Viśiṣṭādvaita is the main cause for this work having been brought to published form; to Dr. Jesse Muthiah who kindly advanced the financial help required for publication; and finally to my wife, for her constant encouragement during the days of labour required to give birth to this literary offspring.

I suggest that any who are not familiar with the more technical Vedantic discussion dealt with in chapters five to nine turn from chapter four directly to chapter ten, then return to the middle portion to read at a more leisurely pace. As I have included a very detailed synopsis, I did not think that a subject index was necessary, in addition to a full index of names.

Readers will detect the occasional inconsistency in transliteration of Sanskrit terms. This is inevitable in that not everyone uses the accepted international method. I trust that these and the few printing mistakes that have occurred will be overlooked. Please note that the tower from which Rāmānuja proclaimed the secret taught him by Nambi was at Tirukoṭṭiyūr, not Śrī-Rangam as stated on page 14.

As I have used so few abbreviations, they may be mentioned here :

BG = Bhagavad-gītā
 DG = Das Gupta
 RGM = Rāmānuja-grantha-mālā
 SB = Śrī-bhāṣya
 SB (T) = Thibaut's translation of Śrī-bhāṣya
 VS = Vedārtha-saṃgraha
 VS (VB) = Van Buitenen's translation of Vedārtha-saṃgraha

For more precise information the bibliography may be referred to.

Secunderabad, A.P.
 (Ugadi 1976 Telugu New Year, March 31st)

ERIC J. LOTT

CORRIGENDA

Page	Line	For	Read
14	26	our	tour
19	21	"the sense of scriptures"	"the sense of scriptures"
24	39	Narayana.....Vishnu	Narayana, whose etymological origins are not very clear.... Vishnu
29	9	do much	do not much
33	1	Buitenen	Van Buitenen
56	38	emantics	semantics
79	4	It	In
90	38	with	which
117	31	Prakṛti	Prakṛti be accepted
123	13	is incongruity	is no incongruity
126	22	for, for him	for him
128	6	memory also...about the ātman's...	memory, also acts as the intermediate link between the ātman and the senses, thus bringing about the ātman's...
137	19	contract	contrast
151	5	more	mere
153	20	I am stout	'I am stout'
157	19	creation have been	creation could not have been
157	24	"kindly concern	"kindly concern"
159	23	the unusual	an unusual
160	7	contradiction	contradictory
162	31	writer	writes
163	20	thesis ⁹³	thesis ⁶³
166	32	cxeatio exnihilo	creatio ex nihilo

Correct form of some mis-spelt Sanskrit terms:

<i>Āgama-Prāmāṇya</i>	1
<i>Aṁśa-aṁśin</i>	2
<i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka</i>	3
<i>Gitārta-Saṃgraha</i>	4
<i>Kāraṇa</i>	5
<i>Nāthamuni</i>	6
<i>Purāṇa</i>	7
<i>Puruṣa-Sūkta</i>	8
<i>Sāraṇa</i>	9
<i>ŚRI</i>	10
<i>Upaniṣad</i>	11
<i>Vaiśeṣika</i>	12
<i>Vedānta</i>	13
<i>Viśiṣṭādvaita</i>	14
<i>v'ṣṇu</i>	15
<i>Vyūha</i>	16
<i>Yādava-prakāśa</i>	17

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SYNOPSIS OF CONTENTS

Introduction

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1

I. Four fold objective: (1) to elucidate R.'s *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva*—properly analogical use. (2) to examine its sources—importance of inner tradition. (3) to analyse how R. distinguishes his position—'synthetic' only in qualified sense. (4) to discuss its significance for wider theological thought—Theol. of 'Organism.' II. Question of methodology. Can R.'s Vedānta be discussed apart from (a) his sectarian milieu? (b) later Vaiṣṇava commentaries? (*bhakti and prapatti*) III. Is R.'s Vedānta valid? Advaita dominance—Thibaut and Ghate's contribution.

CHAPTER I — The Life and Works of Rāmānuja

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Life of R.—Dates; Ālvārs and Ācāryas; Yāmuna and R. Initiation by Nambi; at Kāñci; called to Sri-Rangam; difficulties in transition; proclamation of secret mantra; tours; persecution; exile; return and death in old age. Writings: Vedārtha-saṃgraha, Sri-Bhāṣya, Vedānta-dīpa and Sāra, Gītā-bhāṣya, Gadyatraya. Despite different content of devotional writings, no need to doubt authenticity.

CHAPTER II — Vedic and Vaiṣṇava Influences

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Philosophic tradition adrift. (a) R.'s use of Vedic scripture. Kumarappa's comment—R.'s theism culmination of theistic scripture and tradition. Scripture provides framework, sectarian writings provide details for description of God. Van Buitenen contrasts R.'s methodology with Sankara's (1) authority of *śabda*

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(2) equal authority of all *śruti* (3) primary meaning accepted (4) scriptural context brought out. R.'s conservatism towards scripture—so possible source for *ātma-śarīra-bhāva*. (b) Gītā's teaching sometimes determines *śruti*-interpretation, e.g., *upāsana-bhakti*. But not one way only. Unique mediator between Vedic and Vaiṣṇava backgrounds. (c) Vaiṣṇava literature: characters of Viṣṇu & Śiva—Viṣṇu world-affirming (i) R.'s ambiguous attitude towards Pañcarātra. His commitment to ontological theology gave clearer insight into and articulation of the significance of his tradition. (ii) Ālvārs (iii) Bhāgavata (iv) Viṣṇu-purāṇa.

CHAPTER III — The Sources of Ātma-Śarīra-Bhava ... 29

(1) Upaniṣads (2) Viṣṇu-purāṇa (3) Yāmuna (4) Pañcarātra ritual. All possible sources—though not worked out in Yāmuna or Pañcarātra. But (a) Vyūhas and Vibhava (b) Upāsana before divine image (c) Kaiṅkarya concept—all possible influences.

CHAPTER IV — The Ātma-Śarīra-Bhāva in the Gītā-Bhāṣya ... 38

R. and Gītā. Although some Advaitic-seeming passages, *bhakti* is culmination. In *Gītā-bhāṣya* 10 major doctrines woven into *ātma-śarīra-bhāva*. Idea of universe as divine body intrinsic to Gītā. Interplay of Gītā and *bhakti*-religion. Ultimately thrown back on systematising, articulating genius of R. himself. The analogy he chose as formative feature of doctrine has intrinsically comprehensive character.

CHAPTER V — Rāmānuja and Pūrva-Mimāṃsa ... 49

R. sees continuity of Pūrva in Uttara-M. R.'s upāsana, as enjoined by scripture, implies determinable object of worship. B is

culminating state of spiritual life, not totally other. Main features of M : 3 points of affinity with R. (1) Realism in *pratyakṣa* perception (2) Realism in mistaken identity (3) Vedic words intrinsically potent. In debate with M. (1) *Karma-Kāṇḍa* culminates in *Brahma jñāna* (2) *Brahman* morally transcendent (3) the *Samanvāya adhikaraṇa* (4) Problem of action to be done other than pure knowledge of B. (5) B.-knowledge is final goal of life, thus injunction to *upāsana* provides 'connexion' between man and life-goal. (6) Texts giving knowledge of B. not injunctive but *upāsana* may be enjoined in connection with it. (7) There is always a subject able to know B. (8) *Śabda* not necessarily imperative in character, except in so far as *siddha*-revelation of B. leads to *upāsana* (9) Meaning of 'kārya' uncertain, but in any case connected with end to be achieved. (10) *Kārya-kṛti* similar to *śeṣi-śeṣa* relation. (11) Use of *śeṣa-śeṣin* also in VS. (12) *Kārya* not final end of, or what affected by, action. (13) *Apūrva*-idea cannot establish independent character of 'end' of action—they are done solely to please God. As inner Ruler he guides all actions to their end. (14) R.'s principal concern the transcendence of God. Self-body analogy shows all ritual action included within the divine Being.

CHAPTER VI — Rāmānuja and Sankara

R.'s debt to Sankara largely formal (*vyāvahārika*; *vedānta*); Viśiṣṭādvaita not merely 'modified Advaita.' *Māyā*, *avidyā*, *adhyāsa* basic to Ś. In debate with Ś. (1) Epistemology of relationship—Is this difference basis of ontological difference? In Ś. *ātma*-experience basis of B-jñāna, but then swallowed up in identity of B-*ātman*. Ś.'s transcendental epistemology elusive. (2) R.'s summary of Advaita—its concern for

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CHAPTER VII — Rāmānuja and Bhedābheda

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Inclusion of difference and non-difference essential to Vedānta. Both R. and Ś. differ from *B-pariṇāma* as in Bhedābheda. R.'s severe censure. Bhartṛprapaṇca. But R. also indebted to Bhedābheda, though Dasgupta's claim exaggerated. Differences (1) *Aupādhika* idea

rejected. (2) *jīvātman* and *paramātman* not identical (cp. Dasgupta). (3) Interpretation of *sat-kārya*; Bhāskara's analogies of B.'s cause-effect states. (4) Rāmānuja's use of space-jug analogy. (5) Identity of essence (as in Yādavaprakāśa) unacceptable. (6) *jāti-vyakti* debate; (7) interpreted in terms of *prakāra-prakārin*, and so *śarīra-śarīrin*. (8) Substance and *viśeṣaṇā*. (8) Generic character as *prakāra* or substance explicitly typified; identity ruled out; *prakāra* dependent. (10) Thibaut's translation here questionable. (11) Difference of *jāti* and *vyakti* also not admissible; *prakāra* and *prakārin* in inseparable relationship. (12) Identity statements have some relationship; possible because body is *prakāra* of self. (13) *Prakāra*-concept important link between epistemology and ontology (also *śarīra-bhāva* & *sāmānādhikarāṇya*). (14) Universe is body of B-therefore *prakāra* and so distinct *padārtha*. (15) Further elucidation of *prakāra-prakārin*, *śarīra-śarīrin*, (16) *Prakārin* determines character of *prakāra*. (17) *Aupādhika* leads to identity of B. *jīva*. B. in *pariṇāma*-process as *bhoktr-śakti* and *bhogyā-śakti* (acc. to Bhed.) But R. teaches (a) 3-fold *bhokta*, *bhogyā* and supreme B-ruling as soul to body. (b) *jīvas*' eternally distinct nature (i) *jīvas* & *karma* (ii) distinct even in *mukti* (18) *Bhakti* different in R.- because Object of devotion different too. Bhāskara's *niṣ-prapanca* - B. not integrated into his whole system. R.'s arguments against Yādavaprakāśa similar to above (a-b). (c) If Being fully present in its parts, then Lord fully present in jug! (d) 'Functional' attitude of R. (e) Must not confuse universal-Being with non-difference, for this confuses good and evil.

CHAPTER VIII — Rāmānuja and Sāmkhya
R. and Sāmkhya. Usually said R. very dependent on Sām.; similar expressions inevitable—for Sām.

thought also found in R.'s sources, esp. Gītā. But R.'s system not based on Sām. principles. In some respects Sām. closer to Advaita: distinction of pure-*ātman* and empirical-*jīva*, *adhyāsa* of *prakṛti* on *ātman*, *viveka*'s importance, etc. Originally one world-Soul in Sām.? (1) R. not agree creation results from *Prakṛti*'s evolutionary action alone. (2) A divergent view of the nature of the ground and end of Universal existence, a different use of the process. (3) Different scriptural exegesis, esp. regarding *Pradhāna*. (4) Sām. claims *anumāna* proves existence of *Pradhāna* (following Nyāya arguments); but generally unilateral relationship of cause-effect accepted. (5) Inexplicable teleology-*sahakāri-śakti*. But, says R., unconscious *Pradhāna* incapable of willing. Later *Śeṣvara-Sām.* due to teleological question. But God never creative Cause of all. (6) Imperfect world not point to perfect B. as Cause, says Sām. (7) Cosmological principle must be commensurate with soteriological aim, says R. Meditation on *Pradhāna* does not give release. (8) Body-soul analogy to preserve supremacy and purity of B., who is also material Cause. 'Avyakta' refers to unevolved body of B., not *Pradhāna*. (9) Senses compared to horses etc. Higher than the body is the highest person, the Inner Ruler and self of all. (10) Role of souls in creative process debated. (a) *jīvas* and *karma* in relation to creation. (b) Souls and *adhyāsa* (c) Effect of soul's proximity to *Prakṛti* in creation. Karma secondary in S m. generally; here stressed as material cause. (11) R. attributes karmic-process to ruling Will of God. (12) Sām.'s analogy of blind and lame men for interplay of *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*. (13) Some ambiguity in priority of *karma* or B. in creative action (in R.) (14) *Sat-kārya-vāda* (a—g); inference of world-cause?; no cause-effect if complete difference

of character; but do we sometimes see such difference? Sām. finds body-soul relationship unacceptable explanation of God-universe relationship; for R. this account alone preserves the pure character of God. (15) Definition of body: depends on will of self—but Sām. objects. Finally R. refers to avatār-bodies, as examples of bodies controlled by self. (16) Theistic Sām. (a to d): God only superintends creation, not real cause. But, says R., *prakṛti* is actually B. in form of his body. For B. not dependent on any other entity for creation.

CHAPTER IX — Rāmānuja and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika ...

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For epistemological realistic outlook R. indebted to Ny.-V. Its main features: 5 *padārthas*, 10 *dravyas*, *asatkārya-vāda*. R.'s criticism: (1) Inference of soul from existence of body not valid. (2) Nor from existence of effect for God not necessarily cause. (3) Inferential method quite invalid for establishing God's existence. For inference assumes like nature of cause and effect. (4) Ny. replies forcibly - analogies prove that every effect points to such cause as required for producing that effect. (5) Volitional action possible apart from a body. (6) R. replies: (a) No proof that all created at one time (b) Cannot infer Creator's existence on basis of cause-effect relations found within created existence (c) Influence of *sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas* - whose proportions determined by karma (d) Lord does not need to create through his body and its effort. (7) Scripture alone proves God's existence as Creator. (8) R. against inferential method of Ny. even more strongly than is Sankara. (9) R. refuses to accept body-analogy on an inferential basis because: (a) Ny. uses the body concept differently (b) Body analogy not easily show Lord as material cause (c) Ny. has

inadequate view of Lord's supremacy (10) Supreme Person does not need a body through which to create. (11) Against Vaiśeṣika (a to g): *Ārambhaṇa-adhikaraṇa* meaning what agent of creative activity?; effect must in some way be different from cause. (12) (a to e) No substantial difference of cause and effect. B. is denoted by the 'world' because it is his body-sometimes *sūṣma*, sometimes *sthūla*. Thus he is free from all imperfections. (13) *Asat* describes B.'s qualities previous to creation. Threads-cloth, air-body illustrate process of modification. (14) V.'s origination by atoms rejected. (15) *Adṛṣṭa*, not having *āśraya* cannot initiate creative process. (16) (a to d) On V.'s *samanvāya*, or co-inherence of different entities, R. says if this necessary, then further relationships necessary to an infinite extent. Hiriyanna equates *samanvāya* and *apṛthaksiddhi*. But R.'s thought determined by doctrine of Supreme Person and *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva*.

CHAPTER X — The Significance of the Self-Body Analogy ...

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12 distinct, though inter-related ideas illustrated by the analogy. It signifies: (1) the essential distinction between God and universe; (2) the inseparable relationship between them; (3) the eternal dependence of the universes on God's will; (4) the causal efficacy of God; (5) the immutable perfection of God's essential Being; (6) the inclusive and consummative nature of God's relationship to the universe; (7) God as the Supreme Person; (8) the universe as instrumental to God's will; (9) the divine purpose in the universe; (10) the reality of the universe; (11) the accessibility of God to the universe; (12) it finds superlative expression in God's supernatural body.

CONCLUSION

...

The analogy affords comprehensive application; primarily expresses God's transcendence and immanence. (a) the self-body relationship is sufficiently meaningful, despite arguments by some empiricists, to signify these 2 aspects of the God-universe relationship. (b) Some theists may feel it does not properly signify the creative will of God. But (i) the analogy is not intended to be exhaustive; (ii) *Upādāna* could better be translated 'internal cause'; (iii) if everything is dependent on God's Being and Will, then this is not far from the intention of *ex nihilo*. R's contribution to theological description of God is impressive.

NOTES

...

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INTRODUCTION

This book has a four-fold objective.

(1) It is intended, primarily, to elucidate Rāmānuja's *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva*, his *principal thesis* that the whole universe relates to God as body to soul. Rāmānuja makes use of this bold analogy both in a descriptive and in a determinative sense. That is, in some cases it seems to describe what is understood from other sources concerning the Godworld relationship. In other cases the analogy itself determines something of the nature of that relationship. This two-edged analogical method is surely essential in any theological description of the transcendent¹. It is true that Rāmānuja often says that the universe *is* the body of God. This is partly because he finds this concept in the revealed tradition, which naturally gives great force to the idea and encourages him to take it literally rather than just analogically.

A stronger reason for such a literal use of the idea is that the God-universe relation is for Rāmānuja, just such an organically inseparable one. However, in other places² Rāmānuja clearly sets limits to the sense in which the universe may be called the body of God. The structure of human existence gives some indication of the nature of the transcendent but does not reveal everything of it. Thus the *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva* is an analogue. The attempt to analyse and elucidate this analogue is the general aim of this book.

(2) There is also an attempt to examine the possible *sources* of this body-self analogy. Vedas and Upaniṣads, Bhagavad-Gītā, Purāṇas and Pañcārātra, Yāmuna and even Naiyāyika, all have some claim to providing Rāmānuja with his determinative concept. Chapters two to four consider these claims. It has to be admitted that there is no conclusive evidence that Rāmānuja is indebted exclusively to any one source even in this matter of the body-self analogy. But the attempt is worth making if only because it raises in an acute form the wider issue of continuity in a religious tradition.

The task Rāmānuja set himself required fidelity both to the Vedic and the Vaiṣṇava traditions.

Many Vaiṣṇavas naturally claim that there is no discrepancy between these two traditions, which is precisely Rāmānuja's own position. Whether this is so or not, the pressures of orthodoxy made it necessary to claim the Vedas as the principal source of all important teachings.

Western scholars^a today stress the dependency of any religion upon its 'inner' tradition, its myths, rituals and esoteric symbolism, for that religion's creative springs and essential life-sources. There is a great deal of truth in this claim, which has been overlooked by those more concerned, as in classical and modern Vedānta, for the philosophy of religion. In fact, non-Vaiṣṇava Indian writers have often given the impression that anything which derives from sectarian sources, and not directly from a purely Vedāntic source, is suspect. This ignores both the original roots of Vedānta, which was certainly not pure philosophy, and also the possibility of a genuine convergence of religious outlooks in Vedāntic and sectarian traditions. It is always possible that the esoteric sectarian tradition preserves the essence of Vedānta in a 'purer' form than systematised, articulate Vedāntic philosophy has done.

However, in Rāmānuja's case the reverse of this seems more probable. As will be suggested later, the particular form of Vedānta which Rāmānuja develops, Viśiṣṭādvaita, far from obscuring the essential experience of the Vaiṣṇava tradition, illuminates this experience most impressively. And he does this within the terms of authentic Vedānta.

(3) It is also intended to analyse in what ways Rāmānuja distinguishes his position from the other viewpoints current in the twelfth century. This takes up the main body of the book, from chapter five to chapter nine. Recent writers have emphasised the 'synthetic' character of Rāmānuja's thought. K. C. Varadachari, for example, in his study⁴ of Rāmānuja's epistemology wrote:

"What is essential in a constructive exposition and criticism of any school is not so much the ability to refute

other systems and the presentation of the thesis as emerging from these discussions but the necessity to show the synthetic Organic or integral theory in its largest development."

Anima Sengupta⁵ may be quoted as another example:

"Rāmānuja's philosophy has the merit of bridging the gulf between different systems of ancient Indian Philosophy in the spheres of ontology, epistemology, ethics and religion, as a result of which his philosophical approach to the different problems of life and the universe has become primarily synthetic."

In the concluding chapter of her book Sengupta capably elaborates this claim, showing how Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita incorporates in an incomparable way elements from a variety of divergent outlooks. In particular the potential inclusiveness of *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva* is well emphasised.

A mild word of caution, however, is not out of place here. The synthetic, non-analytic approach to the study of religion currently fashionable in India should not be allowed to obscure the *decisiveness* of Rāmānuja's position. His system is inclusive for example, of all three principal methods - *karma*, *bhakti* and *jñāna*. In Sankara's system the first two are entirely subordinate to, in fact add nothing to, *jñāna-mārga*. This latter introduces a non-relatable transcendent element. Rāmānuja's method, on the other hand, is one of *samuccaya* (conjunction, combination, synthesis). But at the same time there is no question about which of the three determines the meaning of the other two. It is *bhakti* which dominates Rāmānuja's whole Vedāntic scheme, though no doubt *bhakti-bhāva* undergoes some modification in order to include *karma* and *jñāna*.

Similarly Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita does include a kind of Monism, Pluralism and Dualism. Yet within this 'synthesis' his Viśiṣṭādvaita dimension confronts each of the other systems with a view of the universe and its relation to God which is not compatible with these systems, unless they too become modified by the Viśiṣṭādvaita viewpoint. Rāmānuja's fierce polemic⁶ against Kevala-advaita is not the result of mere sectarian malice. It represents the strong conviction that if the Viśiṣṭādvaita

bhakti-relationship with God is to be taken seriously, any suggestion that it can be superseded by some higher intuitive realisation must be rejected. Thus there is confrontation as well as comprehensiveness; there is decisiveness as well as inclusiveness. And the same body-soul analogy which provides Rāmānuja with his thesis of inclusiveness is also regularly used to distinguish his position in relation to the other great traditions.

(4) Finally there is an attempt to discuss the significance of this *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva* analogy for wider theological thought. This is the aim of the concluding chapter. Naturally any such attempt to extend the teaching of one religious system and relate it to other systems must be done with extreme caution. Taken out of its proper context any religious doctrine can all too easily be distorted and misapplied to religious contexts that may be alien to it. This could be particularly true of any analogically expressed religious idea. For the same analogy can be applied with rather different meanings by different people.

It is however, significant that Western theological thinking is being increasingly attracted by the idea that the universal process, including Deity in his relational aspect, is an Organism.⁷ This Process philosophy also has used the body analogy to describe the organismic relation between the universe and God. A significant number of Western theologians⁸ seem dissatisfied with the traditional doctrine of God as immutably transcendent. In any case it is an opportune time for more Western theologians at least to consider the Viśiṣṭādvaita description of the creative process.

On the other side of the coin we find some Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophers making liberal use of the concepts and terminology of nineteenth and early twentieth-century Western metaphysical writings. Two notable examples of this are the respected Viśiṣṭādvaitins, P. N. Srinivasachari⁹ and K. C. Varadachari. A further passage from the latter, in which he uses the concept of Dynamic Organism to describe Rāmānuja's thought, is relevant:¹⁰

"The problem is one of dynamic multiplicity, a multiplicity that is growing, is full of contingent relations, in one

word is one of ever increasing and renewing activity...It is impossible to conceive it as a mechanical or a material one. As progress and evolution cannot be registered in them, we have to find out whether this is possible in a spiritual unity of love that is most logically explainable as organic co-existence."

We have to ask to what extent this kind of interpretation emerges directly from Rāmānuja's own thought, and how much it is indebted for its concepts as well as terminology to the metaphysics of a non-Viśiṣṭādvaita background. This question is not intended as a value-judgement, for it may be that this kind of interplay of traditions is precisely the way by which we discover the inner logic and implicit potential of our own tradition.

This raises the whole question of the proper methodology to be employed in the study, description and evaluation of any religious tradition. This is at present an immensely important issue on the study of religion in the West. This can be put in the form of three questions, each inter-related.

(a) Can Rāmānuja's Vedāntic thought and writing be discussed validly apart from his particular religious tradition or sectarian milieu? Most students' understanding of Rāmānuja is confined to his formal Vedāntic writings, especially to the more important parts of his *Śrī-Bhāṣya*. Very little study is given to his more specifically Vaiṣṇava thought and practice. Yet all Śrī-Vaiṣṇavas find the focal point of their reverence in precisely this sectarian side of Rāmānuja's work. And every student of Rāmānuja should be aware of this devotional thought and ritual practice dominating the Vaiṣṇava background if he is to gain a complete picture of Viśiṣṭādvaita. It is gratifying to find a number of articles in the recently published book entitled "*Viśiṣṭādvaita*" devoted to a variety of such important sectarian features.¹¹

Another recent book which may well become a basic textbook in the study of Rāmānuja's thought is John Carman's *The Theology of Rāmānuja*. The title itself indicates something of the intention of this carefully documented and immensely judicious work. Rāmānuja's primary significance is

as a 'Hindu theologian', not as a philosopher. Carman claims convincingly that Rāmānuja's life, work and writing as a Vaiṣṇava devotee and Ācārya cannot be ignored without weakening the impact and distorting the significance of his thought. We shall return later to Carman's methodology and his contribution to our understanding of Rāmānuja.

(b) The second question relates directly to the first. Is it possible or proper to discuss Rāmānuja's thought without reference to the interpretations of the later great Vaiṣṇava teachers, such as Sudarśana Sūri and Vedānta Deśika? Traditional Viśiṣṭādvaita replies with a categorical 'no'. Perhaps the key issue in this matter is the interpretation of *bhakti*. For this immediately highlights the close relationship of these first two questions. It shows how the understanding provided by subsequent tradition relates to Rāmānuja's own sectarian devotional and ritual background. Thus the two questions are but two aspects of one important issue - the relation between esoteric sectarian experience and the communication of this tradition in more widely acceptable (philosophic?) terms.

It is always possible that there may be distortion of the primary faith of any sect in making this communicable and more universally acceptable. There is invariably borrowing of terminology and even ideas from some wider religious tradition. This is essential to the growth and communication of any religion. But it does not necessarily result in the distortion of its essential experience. So when we find Rāmānuja expressing his Vaiṣṇava faith largely in terms acceptable to Vedānta, we need not assume that some more characteristically Vaiṣṇava interpretation, such as was later given by Vedānta Deśika for example, is necessary to appreciate its proper meaning. Without any such 'commentary' from within the Vaiṣṇava tradition Rāmānuja's teaching is quite comprehensible.

More important, by restricting his presentation of Viśiṣṭādvaita to more widely acceptable Vedāntic terms than those used both by his predecessors and successors in the Vaiṣṇava tradition Rāmānuja seemed the better able to make explicit the inner structure and dynamic of Viśiṣṭādvaita. However, there is no doubt that to appreciate the full flowering of Viśiṣṭādvaita thought and experience, it is essential to study

his traditional commentators and the more esoteric aspects of Śrī-Vaiṣṇava in addition to the formal Vedāntic writings of Rāmānuja. But for the reasons outlined above, this book in general makes reference only to these more formal writings, that is *Śrī-Bhāṣya*, *Gītā-Bhāṣya* and *Vedārtha-Saṃgraha*.

We may now apply this general methodological principle to the particular question of the meaning of *bhakti* in Rāmānuja, and its relation to *prapatti*. Rāmānuja does not normally describe *bhakti* in terms of *prapatti* or sheer surrender to divine grace. Nor does he describe *prapatti* as a *mukti-sādhana* separate from *bhakti*. He was concerned to maintain the *samuccaya* method, and the *upāsana*-responsibilities of both Vedic and Vaiṣṇava traditions. That he did at times allow a kind of *prapatti*-method seems fairly conclusive, though this has been denied by some scholars. In fact, it would be difficult to be faithful to the *Gītā*, as Rāmānuja is, and interpret the *carama-śloka*, of 18.66 without teaching *prapatti* of some kind. And what Rāmānuja says on this verse is virtually echoed in *Gadya-traya*, though the *Gītā-bhāṣya* is more restrained in its use of Vaiṣṇava esoteric. In any case there is no convincing reason for us to reject the authenticity of *Gadya-traya*, or to make Vedānta Deśika and other Śrī-Vaiṣṇavas entirely responsible for the sect's teaching about *prapatti*. No doubt Vedānta Deśika did give much more prominence to the *prapatti* concept and, more important, taught this as something separate from and in some cases superceding *bhakti*. For this reason Vedānta Deśika did not find Rāmānuja's comment on the *Gītā*'s *carama-śloka* entirely satisfactory, claiming that the deeper meaning of *prapatti* is brought out more clearly in Rāmānuja's *Śaranāgati-gadya*. But, as we shall see, Rāmānuja there does no more than develop in a devotional style the idea of *prapatti* he suggests in the *Gītā-bhāṣya*. There is no new concept as such.

In the *Gītā-bhāṣya*¹² Rāmānuja offers two explanations of the *carama-śloka*'s words "*sarva-dharmān parityajya māmekamśaranam vraja*" First he suggests that the *sarva-dharmān* are the three paths to *mokṣa*, but that these are not to be given up in a literal sense. It is their fruit which are to be abandoned, for the devotee realises that it is God who is the real author of all his actions. God is both *upeya* or the goal of his action, and also *upaya* or means by which he attains his desired goal. Rāmānuja

then suggests that the *dharmas* could mean those special ceremonies done to expiate sin. As they cannot be effective within a short time, and as the devotee cannot effectively enter upon the path of *bhakti* while sin still blocks his way, then it is inevitable that he takes refuge in the Lord's grace. This alone can remove all obstacles which prevent the devotee from practising *bhakti-sādhana*.

Rāmānuja's teaching in the *Gadya-traya* devotional tracts merely makes more explicit these two notions of (a) the Lord's grace as the only effective initiator into the life of *bhakti*; and (b) the idea that everything done in the *bhakta's* life is in reality the Lord's doing. In other words the concept of total surrender to the Lord underlies Rāmānuja's entire idea of *bhakti*, *jñāna* and *karma*, and to this extent transcends all three traditional paths. But he does not see *prapatti* as a fourth path superceding the other three. *Prapatti* or *śaranāgati* is implicit in and necessary for the proper fulfilment of the others, *bhakti-mārga* in particular. And once this need for surrender to and service of the Lord is grasped, naturally it tends to make the other religious acts appear subordinate. Thus there is some kind of basis in Rāmānuja's writings for the adoption of *prapatti* as a separate path in later Śrī-Vaiṣṇava. But it is not this later teaching which illuminates our understanding of Rāmānuja's teaching. It is only by a careful study of his writings that his actual teaching emerges.

The *prapatti-bhāva* that emerges in Rāmānuja's commentary on the *Gītā* and in the *Gadya-traya* is quite commensurate with the Viśiṣṭādvaita viewpoint propounded throughout *Śrī-bhāṣya* and *Vedārtha-saṃgraha*. In particular the kind of God presumed in the *ātma-śarīra-bhāva*, and the kind of relationship with his devotees this presumes is entirely of a piece with the concepts implicit in Rāmānuja's *prapatti* teaching. He is a God of unmerited grace, upon which his devotees are entirely dependent and because of which they are able to enter into his eternal service.

(3) The third question raised by this study of Rāmānuja can be put bluntly—How can a Westerner, brought up in an alien religious tradition, expect to understand properly and do full justice to the inner dynamics of Viśiṣṭādvaita? I have already

referred to my intention to 'analyse' Rāmānuja's thought. Does analysis not imply an objectifying process, typical of Western thought, which cuts at the very essence of Vedānta? This may be the Advaitin's position but the Viśiṣṭādvaitin has to answer in the negative. For while there is certainly a non-analysable experiential centre of each religious tradition, the descriptions given by the teachers of each religion are quite cognisable and therefore subject to analysis of various kinds. Naturally in the study of religion no purely 'objective' analysis is either possible or desirable. The analysis should be within the terms of that particular religious system. In the case of Rāmānuja, in that there is a dual orientation, i.e., both towards his Vaiṣṇava tradition and towards the wider Vedānta tradition, the framework for analysis is fairly broad. In any case the analysis needs to be 'sympathetic' and in tune with the inner logic of the system. There is a kind of initiation required before such intelligent sympathy can be attained. But given such affinity with the inner dynamic of a tradition and its concepts, is it not possible for the 'outsider' to make a special kind of contribution towards the analysis of that tradition? His ability to stand back and comment gives him the advantage of a less involved perspective, which surely has its uses.

Arising out of the above discussion is another question of considerable importance. Is Rāmānuja's Vedānta of a valid, authentic type? To the Westerner it sometimes seems that Indian writers, both Vaiṣṇava and others, are over-concerned for Vedāntic acceptability and orthodoxy. If Viśiṣṭādvaita is a self-consistent, convincing doctrinal scheme, why does it matter if some Vedāntins reject its authenticity? But in the Indian religious setting, in which Uttara-Mīmāṃsa has emerged as the dominant religious philosophy, and as the truly authentic expression of the Indian religious consciousness, to be accepted as a genuine Vedāntin is of immense importance.

It is remarkable that both Indian and Western writers purporting to describe Vedāntic thought have for so long given the impression that Vedānta is represented only, or most fully by *Kevala-advaita*. When, for example, in the latter part of the nineteenth century scholars like Paul Deussen¹³ and Max

Müller¹⁴ spoke of 'the Vedānta', they meant Sankara's Advaita. Thus Richard Garbe¹⁵ wrote that Rāmānuja, in dissenting from Sankara's interpretation of the Vedānta, introduced "views that are alien to the true Vedāntic doctrine". Even the classic historical study by Dasgupta¹⁶ adopts a somewhat similar attitude, claiming that "so great is the influence of the philosophy propounded by Sankara and elaborated by his illustrious followers, that whenever we speak of the Vedānta philosophy we mean the philosophy that was propounded by Sankara. If other expositions are intended, the names of the exponents have to be mentioned (e.g., Rāmānuja-mata, Vallabha-mata, etc.)." Thus we find that only Advaita is included in his section bearing the name 'Vedānta'. This is a strangely biased view, for in the Indian context it is in fact more natural to speak of 'Kevalādvaita', 'Viśiṣṭādvaita' etc., as being recognised branches of the one Vedāntic discipline.

There have been, from time to time, attempts by both Indian and Western scholars to show that the Vedantic tradition is wider than Advaita alone, or at least to emphasise that theism also has Vedantic validity. Thus S. K. Das¹⁷ remonstrated with P. N. Sen when he wrote that "the philosophy of Sankara... is the Vedānta *par-excellence*", Das claimed that "such advance labelling of the Vedānta comes perilously near to the *ipse dixit* of a dogmatist or propagandist." It is interesting to find, however, that Das¹⁸ goes on to contend that the supremacy of Sankara's teaching must be seen in "his logic of absolutism, or what is the same thing, his logic of comprehension," all other schools being classed as cases of "arrested development". In defence of the comprehensiveness of Hinduism, however, even Radhakrishnan,¹⁹ who undoubtedly would regard Sankara as the most reliable exponent of Vedānta (despite certain reservations about his doctrine of *māyā*), feels it necessary to criticise Western scholars who have overlooked the existence of theism in Hindu faith, and who "persist in foisting on Hinduism as a whole the theory of abstract monism."

Two scholars who did much to redress the Advaitist monopoly within Vedānta are George Thibaut²⁰ and V. S. Ghate,²¹ neither of whom are 'Rāmānujists'. Thibaut's introduction to his translations of the Bhāṣyas of Sankara and

Rāmānuja on the *Brahma-Sūtras* showed convincingly that Rāmānuja's theistic system can claim to be a more faithful interpretation than Sankara's. Thibaut disclaimed the relevance of this in making any ultimate judgement about the merits of their respective philosophies. But if it can be shown that Rāmānuja's commentary represents more faithfully the original intention of these admittedly problematic aphorisms, then it not only follows that Rāmānuja can claim a valid place within the Vedāntic tradition, but also that he may well be reformulating a Vedāntic tradition that is much more ancient than Sankara's Advaitic interpretation. Thibaut thus thinks it likely that when Rāmānuja makes reference to the much earlier theistic commentators on the *Sūtras*, such as Dramida and Bodhāyana,²² he shows a genuine indebtedness to these Vedāntins, and is not merely making formal claims to an ancient pedigree.

V. S. Ghate prefaced²³ his study of the *Sūtras* and the *Bhāṣyas* with the hope that his thesis would help "in removing the idea which is now current in Europe that the sum of the Vedānta is to be found in the system of Sankara." His conclusion was that of the five Bhāṣyas considered, Sankara, Rāmānuja, Vallabha, Nimbārka and Madhva, it is Nimbārka's system of Dvaitādvaita, in which both difference and non-difference are recognised as equally real, which should be regarded as most near the intention of the *Sūtra-kāra*. For although the *Sūtras* are an attempt to systematise the Upaniṣadic material, Ghate maintains that a certain ambivalence is still characteristic of the *Sūtras'* position, and therefore any attempt to eliminate this ambivalence cannot claim to be authentic. "The more advanced (in) systematisation the further removed from...the *Sūtras*."²⁴ Following this canon of interpretation, Rāmānuja is placed second, next to Nimbārka, in the grading allotted by Ghate to the various systems.

Should this particular evaluative canon not appear very convincing, carrying as it does the suggestion that the intrinsically self-contradictory may be nearest the thought of the *Sūtras*, we can at least agree that a valid Vedānta should be comprehensive in its scope. However, this should not be at the expense of self-consistency. We have already referred to the distinctive, and certainly self-consistent, type of inclusiveness achieved by Rāmānuja by his use of the *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva*.

CHAPTER I

THE LIFE AND WORKS OF RĀMĀNUJA

Vaiṣṇava tradition¹ states that Rāmanuja was born in 1017 AD at Śrī Perumbūdūr, twenty-six miles from Madras, and died in 1137 AD at Śrī-Rangam, Tiruchurāpalli. Naturally not everyone accepts these dates precisely as they stand, but there is little definite historical evidence that can help in amending them.²

The Vaiṣṇava Ālvār saints³ had stirred Tamiḷnāḍu from about the fourth to the eighth centuries with their fervent message of divine grace. Of the twelve remembered in the Vaiṣṇava tradition we may mention Bhaktisāra, Tirumangai, Nammālvār (Sāthakopa) and the woman among them, Aṇḍāl. It was the task of the Ācāryas later to consolidate the Ālvār's influence and systematise their teachings, and thus strengthen the sacramental bond which the Śrī-Vaiṣṇava community experienced with them. The first Ācārya, Nāthamuni, a Brahmin adept in both Yoga and Nyāya, gathered the devotional songs of the Ālvār together in the *Nālāyira-divya-prabandham*.⁴ Eventually Nāthamuni became the administrative authority, as well as principal teacher, of the temple at Śrī-Rangam. He seems to have been concerned to establish the Vedic Orthodoxy of Śrī-Vaiṣṇavas. His dates are given as 823 to 923 AD.

Nāthamuni's grandson, Yāmuna, was the second Ācārya of Śrī-Rangam. He went further in giving a Vedāntic form of expression to Vaiṣṇava doctrine, especially in his *Siddhi-traya*^{4a}, which is only partly extant. We also have his defence of the sectarian metaphysics and ritual, Pañcarātra, which he called Āgama-pramāṇya⁵. His dedication to the *Bhagavadgītā*'s teaching is seen in his *Gītārtha-saṃgraha*,⁶ and his devotional attitude in *Stotra-ratna*.⁷ His life span is given as 916—1036 AD.

Rāmanuja, the third Ācārya, never met Yāmuna in person, but is said to have arrived at Śrī-Rangam just after his death,

when he dedicated himself to carrying out Yāmuna's three unfulfilled wishes indicated by the three bent fingers of Yāmuna's corpse. The most important specific resolution was to write a full-length commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtras*. After his marriage Rāmanuja became a disciple of Yādava Prakāśa, who is referred to both as an Advaitin and a Bhedābheda-vādin. In any case there was soon strong difference of opinion between Guru and Śiṣya, resulting eventually in Rāmanuja breaking with Yādava Prakāśa and joining a non-Brahmin disciple of Yāmuna's Tirukacci Nambi at Kāncipuram.

Nambi instructed Rāmanuja to begin by carrying out the lowly task of bringing water from the well for the temple ritual. Despite the problem of Tirukacci Nambi being of a lower caste, Rāmanuja was fully intent on accepting him as Guru. However, some tension resulted from this situation, especially because of Rāmanuja's wife's orthodox caste-consciousness, and eventually he was directed to Periya Nambi of Śrī-Rangam. There was an unexpectedly auspicious meeting of these two and Rāmanuja received the primary initiation into Śrī-Vaiṣṇava from Periya Nambi. This included the branding of his shoulders, the marking of his forehead and the imparting of the secret *mantra*. After six months of instruction the wives of these two quarrelled over the question of their relative caste status, after which Rāmanuja sent his wife to her home and became a *sanyāsi* himself.⁸

Rāmanuja then began to lead a small monastic community in Kāncī, and even Yādava Prakāśa became one of his disciples, having been converted to a Śrī-Vaiṣṇava largely because of his mother's promptings. At this point Lord Ranganātha of Śrī-Rangam sent a message, through his priests, to Lord Varada of Kāncī, asking for Rāmanuja to be released for service to Śrī-Rangam. This was at first refused, but the dancing and singing of one of Yāmuna's disciples was so appreciated by Lord Varada that finally he acceded to the request.

Rāmanuja immediately took up the task of supervising the great temple at Śrī-Rangam. But his zeal in reorganising the administration was resented by the priests there and his taking over the temple leadership was far from smooth. There are somewhat conflicting versions⁹ of what actually happened, but

in any case harmony was established eventually. Non-Brahmins were retained in various positions despite some pressure to change to an all-Brahmin administration. It is also probable that Rāmānuja was able to bring about greater co-operation between the more Vedic Brahmins and those more thoroughly steeped in the Sri-Vaiṣṇava tradition.

But Rāmānuja himself was still to be fully initiated into the more esoteric side of Sri-Vaiṣṇava teachings. For example Yāmuna's senior disciple, after keeping Rāmānuja waiting a long time, revealed the secret of Guru-prapatti, depending on the Guru as an avatāra of God. Then at Tirumalai Rāmānuja's uncle taught him for a year the inner meaning of the Rāmāyaṇa. The incident of the secret mantra "*Om Namo Narayāṇāyā*" taught by Tirukoṭṭiyur Nambi is of particular interest. Rāmānuja went eighteen times to him to learn this secret, each time being sent away disappointed. When finally the mystery was imparted Rāmānuja went the very next day up on to a tower of *Sri-Rangam* and proclaimed it to all the Sri-Vaiṣṇavas gathered below. His defence for this action, done in defiance of his Guru's instruction, was that this means to salvation must be heard by all Sri-Vaiṣṇavas, even if it meant his own damnation. On hearing this Nambi confessed that he was "unable to attain this fulness".¹⁰ Here we see Rāmānuja's life-concern for the divine revelation to be made available to as many as possible.

It was this concern that led Rāmānuja to our various parts of South India and even further afield,¹¹ and to engage in philosophical disputes with scholars of various schools. There are various accounts given of his success in such debates, though in some cases it was some special manifestation of divine power which is said to have convinced his opponents, rather than his polemic ability. The debate with Śaivas at Tirumalai, for example, was decided by Venkaṭeśvara himself picking up the Vaiṣṇava emblems and wearing them in preference to the emblems of Śiva.

That Rāmānuja suffered various kinds of persecution seems well established. A number of years¹² had to be spent in exile from Sri-Rangam in the Hoysala kingdom in Kāṇṇāṭaga. One of the Coḷas was so pro-Śiva that he commanded Rāmānuja to confess his faith in the supremacy of Śiva. Naturally he

refused to do this. The action of his disciples Periya Nambi and Kūrattālvān, in taking his place, one of them disguised as Rāmānuja, and even accepting the loss of their eyes in order to ensure their Ācārya's escape, is a sure testimony to the strong loyalty Rāmānuja evoked. While in the Hoysala kingdom, Rāmānuja was remarkably successful in winning over the Jainas to Vaiṣṇava. After his conversion, King Biṭṭideva took the name Viṣṇuvārdhana and assisted Rāmānuja in establishing a number of Vaiṣṇava temples in the region. Melkote is the best known of these. No doubt some were previously Jaina centres, and many Jaina monks turned to Vaiṣṇava, some whole-heartedly, some not. There are accounts of one thousand monks committing suicide rather than become Vaiṣṇavas, and of others being "ground to powder", either by the over-zealous Viṣṇuvārdhana, or by fellow-monks. Perhaps these accounts can be taken metaphorically, though the fact is that killing in the name of religion was not uncommon at the time, especially by Śaivas. Many accounts, however, stress the magnanimity of Rāmānuja towards defeated opponents. When the fanatic Coḷa king died, Rāmānuja was able to return to Sri-Rangam where he eventually died in extreme old age surrounded by many beloved disciples.

Rāmānuja's works are :

(a) the *Vedārtha saṃgraha*¹³, a medium-length work, probably his first. This deals fairly systematically with most of the important issues in Vedānta. It is the only major work of Rāmānuja's which as a whole, is not based on any particular text, though some parts of it are really commentaries on certain important Upaniṣadic texts. Hence it probably reflects Rāmānuja's own order of priorities.

(b) *Śrī-Bhāṣya*¹⁴ is a full length commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras*. A notable feature is the great length of the comment on the first *Sūtra*. This includes the *Mahā-siddhānta*¹⁵ in which Rāmānuja gives a detailed exposition of his ideas in relation to Advaita.

(c) *Vedānta-dīpa* and *Vedānta-sāra*¹⁶ are two brief commentaries on the same *Sūtras*. There is no valid reason for doubting their authenticity, despite Van Buitenen's arguments.¹⁷ We do not know precisely for what kind of readers they were

intended, but we may assume that students in the early stages of their initiation could profit greatly from just such a summary statement of Viśiṣṭādvaita's interpretation of this basic Vedāntic document.

(d) The *Gītā-bhāṣya*¹⁸ is probably of all the classical commentaries the most authentic interpretation of the *Gītā*'s original import.¹⁹ Naturally there is a somewhat more devotional mood than in *Śrī-Bhāṣya*, which is reflected in its opening *Mangala-śloka*. Many scholars stress Rāmaṇuja's indebtedness to Yāmuna's summary of the *Gītā*'s teaching. However, Yāmuna's is such a brief condensation that on the basis of this written work Rāmaṇuja can have been indebted to him for little more than his general interpretative viewpoint. The oral initiation into the Vaiṣṇava interpretation, given by Yāmuna's disciples, may well have been more detailed and decisive.

(e) The *Gadya-traya* and *Nitya-grantha*^{19a} are shorter, more esoteric devotional works. The *Saranāgati-gadya* in particular, being a dialogue between Rāmaṇuja and the divine couple Śrī and Lord Nārāyaṇa, plays an important role in the devotional life of Śrī-Vaiṣṇavas. It expresses the devotee's (Rāmaṇuja's) ardent desire for forgiveness, for enlightenment and the experience of total surrender to the Lord, who is initially approached through Śrī-Lakṣmi. Then the Lord graciously grants this request. *Śrī-ranga-gadya* is a prayer for acceptance as an eternal servant (*kincara*) of the Lord. *Vaikuntha-gadya* is a detailed description of Viṣṇu's eternal dwelling-place. This should be meditated on after surrendering oneself in the act of *prapatti*. The *Nitya-grantha* is a manual for daily non-temple worship by Śrī-Vaiṣṇavas, to be offered before the household or monastery image. Or a mental image may be held before one.

The tone and to some extent the terminology of these devotional works are so different from Rāmaṇuja's other Vedāntic writings that some scholars have doubted their authenticity²⁰. But today, the methodology employed in the study of religions gives fuller recognition to the place of the esoteric tradition in any religion. There is every reason to believe that Rāmaṇuja's inner religious consciousness was as much concerned with the Vaiṣṇava devotional life as with its

more formal Vedāntic expression. The argument that the emphasis on surrender is quite different from the *upāsana* viewpoint of *Śrī-Bhāṣya*, etc., is significant, but in no way disproves the authenticity of the *Gadyas*. As we shall see there is in fact no intrinsic contradiction of teaching, and they are clearly written with a very different intention from the more formal Vedāntic works.

CHAPTER II

VEDIC AND VAISNAVA INFLUENCES

It is of more than academic interest to attempt to distinguish the principal sources of Rāmānuja's system. For this raises perhaps more acutely than in any other Vedāntin the problem of the relation of ancient tradition to emergent system. From where did Rāmānuja derive that *Śarira-Śariri-bhīva* which proved to be his formative 'thesis' determining the shape of his 'synthesis'? Clearly there were many currents of tradition swirling around in the religious milieu of Rāmānuja's time. "Philosophically speaking", writes Van Buitenen¹ "tradition was adrift." Rāmānuja's greatness lies, not in his exposition of some entirely new principle, but in his ability to grasp from those materials already available in seminal form precisely those which were essential for a viable theistic Vedānta, and articulate them in a remarkably original way. But he has no innovator, either from a Vaiṣṇava or from a Vedāntic point of view. This in no way detracts from his greatness, or lessens his uniqueness. For a viable synthesis will require the more convincing rationale in explanation of the particular selection of doctrinal materials made from the complex mass of tradition available.

(a) *Vedic Scripture*: By way of a general consideration of Rāmānuja's attitude to scripture we may first briefly refer to the conclusions reached by Bharatan Kumarappa² and J. A. B. Van-Buitenen³ on this question of Rāmānuja's sources. Kumarappa's intention is to show that Rāmānuja's theism was a proper culmination of the theistic strand found in the *Upaniṣads*. This theism appears decisively in the *Gitā*⁴ and is developed in the sectarian Vaiṣṇava writings, *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*⁵ and *Pañcarātra-Āgamas*.⁶ Its more ecstatic manifestation is seen in the songs of the Tamil Ālvārs,⁷ some two to six centuries prior to Rāmānuja. After tracing the various expressions of theistic belief through these traditions, Kumarappa then examines Rāmānuja's teaching, with divisions dealing separately with his doctrine of the Deity, the Deity in relation to the world, and the

Deity in relation to the soul. His conclusions are interesting, for he maintains that while Rāmānuja *professes* to have obtained his doctrine of the Deity direct from *śruti*, or the principal *Upaniṣads*, this is in fact not the case, for "most of his doctrines regarding the nature of the Deity (derive) from his own religious sect."⁸ However, Kumarappa goes on to suggest that in the case (a) of the God-world doctrine, (b) and in particular Rāmānuja's view that the world forms the body of *Brahman*, and (c) that ultimately *Brahman* is a triad, containing matter and souls within himself, there was direct derivation from the *Upaniṣadic* teaching.⁹ Thus *śruti* provides what Kumarappa calls "the general framework of his system." Whether such a distinction between the 'nature' of God and God in relation to the world is legitimate is questionable.

Van Buitenen's initial thesis is that "Rāmānuja...was the first Indian thinker who succeeded in creating a philosophical system out of the data of popular emotional religion."¹⁰ But some doubt arises as to precisely what Van Buitenen means by this statement. For like Kumarappa, he later suggests that the "general conclusions" reached by Rāmānuja about "the sense of scriptures" is the fundamental doctrine that the Personal God who is possessed of perfect qualities, is modified by the world of *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*...which constitute the body to which he is the soul."¹¹ But is it legitimate to suggest that this doctrine is solely derived from "the data of popular emotional religion", and then read into the scriptures? Would such a procedure be consonant with Rāmānuja's general attitude towards scripture? And how could it be reconciled with Rāmānuja's claim to be upholding a more ancient Vedāntic tradition than Śaṅkara? Van Buitenen¹² enumerates four exegetical principles of Rāmānuja's in general contradistinction from Śaṅkara's. Rāmānuja accepts: (1) The authority of *śabda*; (2) The equal authority of all *śruti*; (3) The importance of the *primary* meaning of scripture; (4) Scriptural *context* as necessary for ascertaining the meaning of texts.

1. The discussion concerning *śabda* is particularly complicated and will be discussed in the fifth chapter.¹³

2. The question of *śabda* is clearly related to the matter of the authority of all *śruti*. An important feature of Śaṅkara's

exegetical method is that he distinguishes between texts of *paramārtha-jñāna* and others of less importance,¹⁴ or between major and minor texts, this distinction corresponding to his more fundamental ontological distinction of *pāramārthika* and *vyāvahārika*.¹⁵ So we find that in the last analysis huge segments of scripture are made entirely subordinate to the major texts, and that Sankara's selection of these 'major texts' is determined entirely by their support of his system of Kevāla-advaita. Rāmānuja however professes that all *śruti* texts are of equal authority. This maxim is implicit in his exegetical procedure, in which the so-called *mahāvākyas* are throughout given equal weight with other texts,¹⁶ and is made quite explicit in cases where texts of an enigmatic or ambiguous nature are interpreted in the light of other more clearly expressed texts. For example the *Mahāvākya* "*tat-tvam-asi*", which in itself cannot claim to give any logically exact idea of the *Brahman-ātman* relationship, is clarified in the light of a *Śvetāśvatara* passage¹⁷ where it is clearly stated that immortality is dependent upon the knowledge "that the soul and its controller exist separately."¹⁸ We may mention here that lack of formal commentaries by Rāmānuja on the *Upaniṣads* as were written by both Sankara and Madhva in no way detracts from his respect for *śruti*. As Raghavachar has shown conclusively in his book, *Śrī Rāmānuja on the Upaniṣads*,^{19a} Rāmānuja's works are packed with relevant Upaniṣadic references, without any straining of meaning. Moreover, Rāmānuja considered his main task to be the faithful presentation of the Vedāntic tradition which in turn was based on Upaniṣadic ideas. This he did by his commenting on the *Sūtras*, already the repository of a given and coherent Vedāntic system. His *Vedārtha-Saṃgraha* presented Upaniṣadic Vedānta in even more coherent and self consistent form. He seems to have seen no need for independent commentaries on each *Upaniṣad*. In any case it was not a long-standing Vedāntic custom to do this. And Rāmānuja was essentially conservative in these matters.

3. As against Sankara, Rāmānuja argues for the acceptance of the 'primary' meaning of scripture, eliminating the idea of any 'secondary' meaning. Sankara¹⁹ interprets such texts as "*Satya-jñāna-ananta-brahman*" (*Taitt. Up.* 2.1)

to mean that the *Viśeṣaṇas*, *satya*, *jñāna* and *ananta* do not imply an attributive function or relation to the subject *Brahman*, but a 'definitive' one. We note that Van Buitenen's translation²⁰ here of *lakṣaṇārtha* as 'definitive' carries a more suitable meaning than Thibaut's²¹ 'implication', (followed by Kumarappa and others.) Sankara further contended that such 'definitives' distinguish the defined object from all other objects, and also that they are 'necessarily synonymous', for each is definitive of the essentially unqualifiable being of *Brahman*. Other *Mahāvākyas* such as "*aham-brahma-asmi*" and "*tat-tvam-asi*" are interpreted similarly, so that despite the personal pronouns all sense of empirical ego is dropped along with any differentiating meaning. In this way the 'secondary' meaning is brought out so that they are seen as identity judgements concerning *ātman*. Rāmānuja vigorously rejects this, arguing for the normal use of sentence structures and for the primary or literal meaning of all *śruti*.

4. It is clear from the differences between Sankara and Rāmānuja already discussed that at least in his professed attitude to scripture Rāmānuja is more 'conservative' than Sankara. But, when Rāmānuja refuses to make distinctions in the authoritative standing of various scriptures, the problem remains of reconciling the apparently contradictory or incoherent. This Rāmānuja does by giving importance to scriptural context (*prakaraṇa*),²² especially where difficulties of this sort appear. An example of this method is found in his exegesis²³ of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* passage "*athāta-ādeso-na-iti-na-iti*" (2. 3. 6). In line with his general position Sankara takes this text to mean that all differences, all predicatable attributes are denied of *Brahman*, who is thus without any kind of embodied or disembodied form. Understood in this way the text is a denial of that which comes in the preceding passage²⁴ (2.3.1f) including the predication of various attributes of *Brahman*. But Rāmānuja²⁵ holds to the principle that when initial statement (*upakrama*) and concluding statement (*upasamhara*) are in such agreement, texts included within such a passage must be given the same meaning. Hence "*Neti, neti*" does not deny differentiation as such, but rather denied that *Brahman* can be limited to what has been indicated in the text so far.

"*Tat-tvam-asi*"²⁶ is also interpreted in the light of the immediately preceding context,²⁷ viz., "The entire universe is ensouled by him who is *sat*, it is real, for he is the *Ātman*. So—'*tat-tvam-asi*'. "In view of this clear context the meaning must be that the universe and the *jīvas* have *Brahman* as their soul, hence is the body of *Brahman* and just in so far as all this comprises the body of *Brahman*, is *Brahman*.

This introduces us already to the possibility of *Śruti* as the source for the *Śarīra-Śarīri-Bhāva*. The *śarīrin* aspect of the analogy presents no problems on this score. For it is the consistent revelation of scripture that *Brahman* is the Self of the universe, this being the more explicit Upaniṣadic feature. Its corollary that the universe is the body of *Brahman*, does occur a few times. In any case, this determinative doctrine of Rāmānuja's is clearly quite in harmony with some important strands of Upaniṣadic teaching.

Kumarappa's suggestion²⁸ that the extent to which Rāmānuja insists that his teaching on *Brahman* is scriptural is clear indication that his sources for it are other than scriptural is not valid. Such insistence on scriptural authority in fact in itself has no relevance to the question of ultimate sources. It merely indicates an ostensibly held attitude towards scriptural authority. To insist that his sources are scriptural merely indicates a recognition that they *should* be scriptural.

The above discussion on exegetical method leads us to believe that Rāmānuja held a conservative attitude towards *śruti* as a source of revelation. It is Rāmānuja's contention that distinctions between major and minor texts, and between primary and secondary meanings can only be made on a *human* level, when in fact scripture should be regarded as divine and eternal.

(b) *The Bhagavad Gītā*: What is the place of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* in Rāmānuja's methodology? The *Gītā* is part of the *Itihāsa Mahābhārata*, and thus is *Smṛti*, whose task is merely to support *śruti*. But the *Gītā* is also referred to as an *Upaniṣad*²⁹ which indicates the peculiarly authoritative place the *Gītā* holds as a scripture. All the Vedāntins, of whichever particular sect, felt obliged to write a formal commentary on the *Gītā*. And it is somewhat misleading to refer to it as "a literary

work of his (Rāmānuja's) own sect",³⁰ historically factual though this may be.

This ambiguity of the *Gītā*'s position as scripture is reflected in the use that Rāmānuja makes of it in *Vedārtha-saṃgraha* and *Śrī-Bhāṣya*. For example, we find in the *Bhāṣya*³¹ that in attempting to prove that *Brahman* is not *nirguṇa*, Rāmānuja first cites various *śruti*-texts, then the *Gītā*, then *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*. Whatever opinion may be held about Rāmānuja's ultimate source of doctrine, it is quite clear that as far as his exegetical method is concerned, the *Gītā* and *Purāṇas* are used as corroborative evidence for what has already been established by *śruti*. But despite this formal procedure, so completely does Rāmānuja assume the determinative authority of the *Gītā*, that occasionally *śruti* is interpreted so as to agree with the *Gītā*'s teaching, then it is shown as proven that *Gītā* agrees with *śruti*. One possible example³² of this is when the *Gītā*'s teaching on *bhakti* as loving trustful remembrance seems to be read into and equated with *vedana*, *upāsana* and *dhyāna* as used in the *Upaniṣads*. Rāmānuja then concludes that *śruti* enjoins continual meditation of the *Gītā-bhakti* kind.

This is not entirely a one-way process of course. For it also means that the ecstatic type of *bhakti* found dominating Vaiṣṇava religion at various stages also undergoes something of a re-interpretation.³³ We find, too, at least in Rāmānuja's formal Vedantic writings, a toning down of certain specifically sectarian features. This too may be as much the result of his reading of the *Gītā* as of the classical *Upaniṣads*. The *Gītā* occupies a uniquely inclusive middle-ground between Vedānta and Vaiṣṇava traditions. As such it was an ideal source-book for Rāmānuja's purposes. But we shall need to return³⁴ later to the question of its impact on the development of Rāmānuja's *Śarīra-Śarīri-Bhāva*. For the time being let us accept that his turning to the *śruti*-texts as principal Vedāntic authority was quite sincere, this being confirmed by his exegetical procedure. Nevertheless *śruti* does seem to be read in the light of the *Gītā* and was therefore probably not the primary source of his principal thesis. Not that this results in distortion, but that ambiguities are sometimes resolved by the *Gītā*'s (for Rāmānuja) more unambiguous and determinative outlook. Now that we

have given at least some consideration to the *śruti* and *Gītā*, let us now turn to Rāmaṇuja's use of *smṛti*, especially that which was regarded as representing Vaiṣṇava tradition.

(c) *Vaiṣṇava Literature* : On the question of Rāmaṇuja's so-called 'sectarian' outlook, an interesting suggestion by Van Buitenen³⁵ is worth mentioning. He suggests that Sankara and Rāmaṇuja's distinctive philosophical view points can be more easily understood in the light of their respective theistic backgrounds. In principle this is certainly a point that needs making. It is a fact that the metaphysical systems of all the *darśanas* have so often been studied with no consideration of the various religious factors motivating these systems. For example, there is the Brahmanical sacrifice that forms the dominant milieu of early Upaniṣadic speculation.³⁶

Van Buitenen suggests that reflection on Siva, "the god of annihilation, who represents Yogic renunciation and systematic abnegation", is of a piece with a philosophic position in which the reality of all empirical phenomena is denied in viewing *Brahman* as transcendent consciousness. But this is probably overstressing what was but one aspect of Siva's complex personality,³⁷ though a very prominent aspect. Of Viṣṇu there need be no such doubt in suggesting that a world-affirming, God-dependent philosophy would seem to be the natural corollary of reflection on his character. The name 'Viṣṇu' itself is usually taken to be derived from the root meaning 'to pervade',³⁸ which provides an initial basis for Rāmaṇuja's doctrine of *Brahman* as world-pervading self. Moreover, a world-affirming realism would be more likely to issue from reflection upon a God who from time to time descends in his *avatār*-form for the renewal of *dharma* in his world. An important epithet of Viṣṇu, '*Viśvarūpa*' suggests again, at least in germinal form, the doctrine of *Brahman*'s relation to the universe that Rāmaṇuja takes as his theological framework.

Vaiṣṇava, however, is far more complex than may be suggested by this reference to reflection upon the character of Viṣṇu (or Nārāyaṇa). For the *bhakti*-theism Vaiṣṇava is bound up with the complicated cosmogonical speculations and *tantrika* ritual of Pañcarātra.³⁹ And Rāmaṇuja uses the name "Nārāyaṇa" more frequently than "Viṣṇu".

Those writers who wish to emphasise Rāmaṇuja's continuity with his Vaiṣṇava background (and this includes both committed Vaiṣṇava as well as critics of Rāmaṇuja's Vedāntic authenticity) tend to assume that he was steeped in the Pañcarātra traditions. Both before and after Rāmaṇuja Viśiṣṭādvaitins wrote treatises expounding this system. Not so Rāmaṇuja himself. It is a remarkable fact that in all his writings with the exception of the *Utpatti-sambhava* section of *Śrī Bhāṣya*, where in any case a formal defence of Pañcarātra was required by the text, he avoids any direct reference to Pañcarātra. This does not mean that his commitment to the ritual and speculative traditions of Pañcarātra is in doubt. Presumably his concern for the widest possible Vedāntic recognition accounts to a large extent for this lack of Pañcarātra material.

There is another more intrinsic reason for this. As Van Buitenen has pointed out Rāmaṇuja's principal concern was ontological not cosmogonical, whereas the viewpoint of the Pañcarātra tradition is quite the reverse. The very style of the Viśiṣṭādvaita he sought to articulate made it necessary to avoid the more esoteric, *tantrika* style of much of Pañcarātra. And by such rigorous putting aside of 'tradition' Rāmaṇuja was more effective than any other Viśiṣṭādvaitin in explicating both the ontological and the theological bases of that tradition. In other words, his avoidance of explicit Pañcarātra terminology and this system's explicit viewpoint does not mean that there is no indebtedness of a more subtle kind, to Pañcarātra. In the next chapter we suggest that roots of his *ātma-śarīra* concept may lie deep in Pañcarātra ritual and devotional practices.

But is this absence of explicit sectarian material so curious? Rāmaṇuja's determined dedication to his ontological theology required a rigorous discrimination in formulating his theistic system. It was not merely a matter of expediency, but the need for clarity of articulation and effective communication that precluded an explicit sectarian orientation. Paradoxically he was thus the better able to bring out what was implicit in the sectarian traditions. Some further effects of this non-implicitness of sectarian features may be considered. We find that in *Śrī-Bhāṣya* he gives little expression to the distinguishing marks of Vaiṣṇava. Thibaut⁴¹ contends that virtually the only

exception of this is his identifying *Brahman* with Viṣṇu or Nārayaṇa, but that this cannot be termed 'sectarian' in that "Nārayaṇa is in fact nothing but another name of *Brahman*." To B. N. K. Sharma⁴² it is just this lack of explicit Vaiṣṇava terminology and thought that mars *Śrī-Bhāṣya*'s effectiveness as a refutation of Advaita.

(ii) The task of an *Ācārya* like Rāmānuja was essentially different from the work of the *Ālvārs*, those wandering poets whose aim was publicly to express their ecstatic adoration of their God. But it is surprising that even in the *Gītā-Bhāṣya*, where there is opportunity afforded the commentator if he so wished, to express the *Ālvārs* kind of fervent devotion, we find remarkably little of it. As witnessed by the *Gadya-Traya*, Rāmānuja was not incapable of writing in this more devotional style, but it is apparent that as far as his written work is concerned, his role as Vedāntin almost entirely eclipses his role as devotionalist. When Kumarappa contends that in commenting on the *Gītā*, Rāmānuja "is at liberty to give expression to sectarian ideas without let or hindrance", it is remarkable that he is then able to supply so few and such generally peripheral examples of 'sectarian' passages. The most important of these is Rāmānuja's introductory *mangala*-passage which contains a description of the Deity, His attributes, His ornaments, His consort Śrī, His heavenly abode with a host of celestials hymning His praise, and a brief allusion to His incarnations. "All this is essentially Purāṇic..." Kumarappa then refers us to two other more central passages, the comments on IX.34 and XIII.9.⁴⁴ ("Fix thy heart on me, etc.") in which there is exhortation to loving adoration. But there is very little in Rāmānuja's comment here⁴⁵ which cannot be said to arise naturally from the *Gītā* text itself. So that Kumarappa's contention⁴⁶ that Rāmānuja's emphasis on the divine attributes and *premabhakti* (which teaching is also found in the *Bāṣhya* and in which he sees primarily the influences of *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*) is sectarian, hinges on whether or not we agree that *Gītā* is a 'sectarian' work. It has already been argued here that whatever its origins it cannot so be classed. In fact for at least four or five centuries before Rāmānuja's time it was recognised by Vedāntins as one of the *Prasthāna-traya*.

The other essentially 'sectarian' doctrines that Kumarappa cites,⁴⁷ the *avatārs* of the Lord and the need to reflect upon the beauty of the Lord, are subject to the same criticism. True, Rāmānuja is influenced by his Vaiṣṇava background in the manner in which he fills out the details of some of the above doctrines. One example of this influence is the list of the six divine attributes⁴⁸ which he repeats from time to time when reference is made to the (not peculiarly sectarian) doctrine of *Brahman*'s qualities. It was Nāthamuṇi (probably Yāmuna's grandfather) who collected together the *Ālvārs*' devotional writings and introduced their use (in the *Nālāyira-prabandham*) as a regular part of Vaiṣṇava temple worship. Naturally Rāmānuja too led and took part daily in this worship. But again, this background cannot be said to have determined the style of Rāmānuja's theological expression to any appreciable extent. However, what was suggested earlier in relation to Pāñcarātra could be applied equally well to the *Ālvārs*, viz, the theology and ontology implicit in their devotional symbolism is brought out by Rāmānuja in viable Vedāntic terms.

(iii) The *Bhāgavata-Purāṇa* is another important sectarian work to which Rāmānuja could have turned. It seems rather unnecessary to suggest that this was composed after Rāmānuja's time.⁴⁹ In fact B.N.K. Sharma⁵⁰ finds it strange that for some "inscrutable reason" Rāmānuja made no use of this "gospel of Vaiṣṇavism". Kumarappa⁵¹ claims that one of the essential differences between *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* and *Bhāgavata-Purāṇa* is seen in their respective views of nature of *bhakti*. In the former, *bhakti* is serene meditation and in the latter intensely emotional ecstasy which, he says would naturally tend to be accompanied by an exaggerated sense of non-duality with God, the object of *bhakti*. There is some truth in this,⁵² but in itself seems insufficient reason to account for Rāmānuja's lack of reference to *Śrī-Bhāgavata*. Assuming this *Purāṇa* was available, we must conclude that Rāmānuja's single-minded concern for Vedāntic acceptability motivated his neglect of it. In the Vedānta tradition while *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* was regularly cited as illustrative evidence, even by Sankara, Madhva was the only Vedāntin to make use of *Bhāgavata-Purāṇa*.

(iv) This discussion has raised the question of Rāmānuja's use of the *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*, which, in so far as Sankara makes only eight references to it as corroborative *smṛti*, can be classified principally as Vaiṣṇava writing. Rāmānuja cites the *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*⁵⁵ more frequently than the *Gītā*⁵⁴ in his *Vedārtha-Saṃgraha*, this being reversed in *Sri-Bhāṣya*⁵⁶. Comparing the frequency of citation of *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* with the Upaniṣads we find that in *Sri-Bhāṣya* the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*⁵⁶ is cited almost three times as frequently as *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* and the *Chāndogya* almost four times. *Kaṭha* and *Muṇḍaka* are cited about an equal number of times with the *Purana*, and *Śvetāśvatara* and *Taittiriya* almost twice as frequently.⁵⁷ In the *Gītā-Bhāṣya* we find that *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* is given relatively more weight. It is quoted approximately an equal number of times as the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and *Śvetāśvatara*, but less than the *Chāndogya*.

In all these citations, however, we find that *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* texts are only used as corroboration when his thesis has already been stated and established by other *śruti* texts. This is very different from the procedure followed by Madhva for instance. But this methodology in itself naturally does not prove that Rāmānuja derived his central thesis direct from *śruti*. It could possibly be, as Kumarappa suggests,⁵⁸ that the corroboratively cited *smṛti* is his original source for his teaching on the nature of *Brahman*. Kumarappa at first only makes this suggestion rather tentatively. "It is not by any means improbable that it is to the *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* in particular, and to Vaiṣṇavism in general, that Rāmānuja turned for his doctrine regarding the nature of the Deity." For Kumarappa this includes the divine attributes, the *avatāras* and the perfection of *Brahman*. But the divine nature is made quite a distinct doctrine from the relationship of *Brahman* to the universe and hence the *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva*. Thus Kumarappa's discussion of the "nature of the Deity" omits what is most characteristic of Rāmānuja's theology. This is an impossible dichotomy. It is also unnecessary to look to the *Purāṇa* for the *avatāra*-teaching, when it is so central to the *Gītā*. On the other hand, the very doctrine which Kumarappa does not connect with the *Purāṇa*, viz, the *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva*, is found there as we shall see, in germinal form.

CHAPTER III

THE SOURCES OF ATMA-SARĪRA-BHAVA

It is clearly the *śarīra-śarīrin*, *viśiṣṭa-viśeṣya*, *śeṣa-śeṣin* group of ideas which constitutes the central feature of Rāmānuja's thought. What may we conclude to be its major sources? Tentatively we may enumerate five such: (1) The Upaniṣadic tradition (2) *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* (3) Ramanuja's predecessor at Srīrangam, Yāmuna (4) *Pañca-rātra* ritual (5) (In the next chapter) *Bhagavad-Gītā*.

(1) The contexts of the citation of texts in the commentaries do much help us to solve this problem of derivation. For example, in *Vedārtha-Saṃgraha* the *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva* is introduced very early in the development of the argument, and long before any non-*śruti* passages are cited.¹ But in *Sri-Bhāṣya* this concept is only introduced after substantial quotation from *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*, to which we shall refer later.

The most ancient reference to the universe as a divine body is contained in the *Puruṣa-Sūkta* of the *Rg-Veda* (10.90). In this cosmogonical hymn, springing from the context of sacrificial ritual, it is when the omniscient, omnipresent, all inclusive cosmic Person is offered up by the gods that all the variety of universal life emerges. It is not insignificant that in the later *Śatapatha-Bṛāhmaṇa*² this *Puruṣa*-figure is identified with Nārayaṇa, devotion to whom is seen later as an important strand in the *bhakti* cults³. This basic concept that the *Puruṣa* (Person or Self) comprises the underlying foundation of cosmic existence is found repeatedly, though in a variety of generally mythological forms, throughout the Upaniṣads. In some places it is expressed in a more crude manner. For instance, in *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka*⁴ the androgynous person makes itself separate as male and female. From their copulation in a variety of biological forms the universe of beings is successively born. Here we see that early Upaniṣadic speculation begins from the empirical experience of differentiation, but is persistently seeking for some ultimately integrating principle of

this multi-formed universe, 'the one by which all things can be known.'⁵ This speculation concludes with impressive frequency that something akin to that primeval cosmic *Puruṣa* must be this integrating principle.⁶ *Ātman* is the term gradually used more often than *Puruṣa* in the later Upaniṣads⁷, though in at least one passage⁸ a distinction is made between them, *Ātman* being responsible for the creation of the universe through a *Puruṣa* shaped and brooded over by *Ātman*. But especially in the later writings,⁹ *Puruṣa*, *Ātman* and also *Brahman* appear more or less interchangeably. Some passages suggest complete pantheism, e.g., "this self, truly, is a world of created things."¹⁰ However, the context even of such passages generally implies that *Brahman* is not himself (itself) the universe but "one who completely pervades the universe as its Soul."¹¹

From the point of view of Rāmānuja's self-body teaching, the *Antaryāmin-Brahmaṇa*¹² is the most significant Upaniṣadic passage. Every verse refers to some aspect of the universe as the *śarīra* of *Brahman*. Other texts imply, but do not make explicit, the notion that as *Brahman* is the Self of the universe so in the universe the body of *Brahman*. But given this fundamental Upaniṣadic tenet that *Brahman* is the universal Self and the specific *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* teaching that the universe is his body, there is no intrinsic reason why this *śruti*-teaching should not have been the immediate source of the system that Rāmānuja developed. Of course, the early Upaniṣads do tend towards a form of monism in which any theistic system becomes problematic. But this does not mean that Rāmānuja could not have derived his self-body concept directly from *śruti*. The obvious reason for saying this is that Rāmānuja was able quite convincingly to interpret this Upaniṣadic *Advaita* in his *Viśiṣṭa-advaita* terms.

(2) *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*: The many texts that Rāmānuja quotes from the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*¹³ in general convey the idea of God's (*Brahman*, *Hari*, *Viṣṇu Bhagavat*, etc.) supremacy, the reality of the universe which is his emanation, and the inseparable relationship of God with the universe. The following descriptive terms may be noted: "The universal Self", "the universal form", "all pervading, free from all evil", "the highest Self", "He who is everywhere and in whom all abides...free from all defects", "the support of all, the

highest Lord"; The energy of the highest *Brahman* constitutes this entire world": "All this is the body of *Hari*", "the immanent Self of all beings, embodied by all."¹⁴ The texts from which these terms are taken strikingly illustrate Rāmānuja's thesis of organic relationship as the principal characteristic of the unity of God and universe. That they were the original inspiration for Rāmānuja in his adopting this organic view point is clearly a strong possibility. The case for this is strengthened by the fact that in the *Vedārtha-saṃgraha*, *Śrī-Bhāṣya* and to a certain extent in the *Gītā-Bhāṣya* the most pertinent passages from the *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* relating to the *Śarīra-Śarīri-bhāva* are given in much greater length than quotations from any other source. Thus for example *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* I. 2.10-14; VI.5.82-87; VI.7.69-71. But it is equally significant that in general the *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* passages echo fairly closely the teaching of the more authoritative Vedantic source, the *Bhagavad-gītā*, to which we turn in the next chapter.

(3) *Yāmuna and the Śrī Vaiṣṇava Tradition*: Sankara's attempt to interpret this *Advaita* of the early Upaniṣads within a dominant illusionist outlook had made it imperative for a theistic realism of a more inclusive *Vadānta* to be established. It was Rāmānuja's predecessor at Śrīrangam, Yāmuna, who began this task. Yāmuna's teaching is embodied in his summary of the *Gītā*¹⁵ and especially in his *Siddhi-traya*,¹⁶ in which, making skilful use of metaphysical arguments from *Nyāya* and *Sāṃkhya*, he established, among other great *Viśiṣṭadvaita* teachings, that God is the cause of souls and matter with are his effect; that God is *Śeṣin*, all else is dependent *śeṣa*; that these three *tattvas* are inseparably related; that the *bhakti*-relationship is the supreme means of achieving *mokṣa*.

In his introduction to the *Gītā Bhāṣya*,¹⁷ Van Buitenen suggested that Rāmānuja adopts many features of this general *Viśiṣṭadvaita* teaching of Yāmuna's, but develops in an original way the self-body idea.

"Practically all the salient features of the *Gītā-bhāṣya* are contained in Yāmuna's scheme. Rāmānuja himself leaves no doubt as to his indebtedness to Yāmuna. He

not only dedicated his commentary to Yāmuna with the significant remark that he owes everything to his illustrious, predecessor but he also quotes some of the *ślokas* of the *Gitārtha-saṃgraha* and...makes a point of using Yāmuna's own words, as often as the occasion arises."

In his later work on the *Vedārtha-saṃgraha*,¹⁸ Van Buitenen suggests that both the *ātma-śarīra* framework and the "religious inspiration" derived from the *Gītā* were established by Yāmuna previous to Rāmānuja.

On this score Dasgupta is rightly criticised for neglecting this germinal teaching of Yāmuna's about the relation of God to the world. On the basis of the *Ātma-siddhi* Dasgupta had mistakenly concluded:¹⁹ "Yāmuna's main contribution consists in establishing the self-consciousness of the soul", but he "gives hardly any new ideas about *Īśvara* and his relation to the souls and world", and seems to leave us with an unresolved dualism. Van Buitenen points out, that in Yāmuna's teaching although there is real diversity, the relationship itself is one of non-difference. It is like the intimate connection between *aṃṣa* and *aṃṣin*,²⁰ or has the nature of a *śeṣa-śeṣin* relation that is characterised by dependence.²¹

In his *Īśvara-Siddhi*²² Yāmuna makes this even more explicit, if this reading is accepted, "The universe, which is described by the word *vibhūti*, stands to the one being in a relation of object supported, object governed and object necessary,²³ because it is his body, comparable to the relationship between the 'I' and its body".²⁴ Then in the final stages of the *Īśvara Siddhi* Yāmuna writes: "This universe obeys the command of one person because it is not spiritual, like a body."²⁵

It is significant, however, that the *Gitārtha-saṃgraha* contains none of this latter teaching, even though the *Gītā* lends itself so naturally to the *Śarīra-śarīri-bhāva*. In *ślokas* 14, 19, 22, 26, and 32 there is the general concept of all things being under the lord's *svādhīna* and *svāmyadānaḥ* with the soul subject to the Lord's *Kartṛtva* and *parānugam* in relation to Him. This concept of subservience is but one aspect of the rich meaning expounded by Rāmānuja in his body-soul relationship

Buitenen²⁶, as also M. R. Sampatkumaran²⁷ seems to be claiming too much for *Gitārtha-saṃgraha*.

However Van Buitenen (much less scholars of the Viśiṣṭādvaita tradition) clearly do not wish to minimise the role of Rāmānuja in creatively developing and systematising this Viśiṣṭādvaita basis provided by Yāmuna.

M. Narasimhachary,²⁸ in a recent thorough consideration of Yāmuna's contribution to Viśiṣṭādvaita, also maintains that Rāmānuja owed an immense debt to his predecessor for so many of his basic doctrines. Yāmuna's *Siddhi-traya* is said to be the "source-book" of *Śrī-Bhāṣya*, especially for a number of Rāmānuja's arguments against *Advaita*; his commentary on the fourth *sūtra* (*śāstra-yonitvāt*) "follows almost verbatim" the *Īśvara-siddhi* of Yāmuna; his idea of *bhakti* as propounded in *Gadya-traya* is influenced by Yāmuna's *Stotra-ratna* and *Gitārtha-saṃgraha*; and his explanation of Pañcarātra is said to be based on Yāmuna's *Āgama prāmāṇya*.

No one can deny that on all the above issues Rāmānuja was to a greater or lesser extent influenced by his Vaiṣṇava predecessors, of whom Yāmuna stands out most prominently. And the fact that some of Yāmuna's writings, including a *Puruṣa-nirṇaya* and parts of *Siddhi-traya*, are no longer extant should also be given some weight. But Narasimhachary seems to have overstated his case somewhat, of great value though his study may be in making Yāmuna's teaching more widely available. Narasimhachary claims²⁹ that "the chief tenet of the Viśiṣṭādvaita... hinges upon the concept of *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva* which we have traced out from the works of Yāmuna." However, apart from the *Īśvara-siddhi* statement already referred to, there appears to be only one other clear reference to God as *Śarīrin*. This is a reference in *Ātma-siddhi*³⁰ to the *Antaryāmin* passage and a *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* verse which says that "all these things constitute his body." The context, however, is merely an attempt to define 'śarīra', not the relation of God to universe, and there is no further elucidation in theological terms. Then in *Samvit-siddhi*,³¹ Yāmuna says that the whole universe of *cit-acit* comprises a 'prakāra' of Brahman,

which "derives its being from the fact of having *Brahman* as its soul."

In some cases where Yāmuna describes in general terms the God-universe relationship, Narasimhachary relies on the commentary of Vedānta Deśika to "trace out" the *śarīra-śarīrī-bhāva*.³² In fact it is less explicitly articulated by Yāmuna than by, for example, the *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*. Is it not significant that in the *Ātma-siddhi*,³³ when Yāmuna lists four analogies which illustrate God's relationship with the universe, he does not use this *śarīra-śarīrī-bhāva* at all? It is the master-servant analogy which is more central to his system than the self-body analogy.

We may suggest a reason for this. Much of the *Siddhi-traya* is concerned with complex arguments by and with Mīmāṃsaka and Naiyāyika on the relation of soul to body and physical organs. There is also the important argument about controlling and creative actions and whether such require a physical body. There is no need here to go into the details of this discussion. It is sufficient to say that Yāmuna may have thought that the ambiguity of attitudes towards the body-self relationship precluded its prominent use as a theological analogy, or instrument of polemic argument even though it may have been prominent in the Vaiṣṇava tradition previously. It is interesting to find that not long before Yāmuna, the Naiyāyika scholar Udayana had hinted at the "body-soul relation between God and the ultimate stuff of the universe", i.e., the atoms.³⁴ Udayana conceded that some kind of effective relationship is required between the conscious, ruling principle and unconscious matter in which activity takes place. The body-soul relationship is of such a kind. Presumably Yāmuna did not feel able to develop and use this analogy more fully in his system for the reason suggested above. There were too many ambiguities involved.

Carman, who gives considerable weight to the ongoing Vaiṣṇava tradition in his interpretation of Rāmānuja, points out some interesting³⁵ features in the relationship between Rāmānuja and Yāmuna according to the biographies and oral traditions. In the Vaiṣṇava tradition itself there appears to be emphasis both on Rāmānuja's initiation into Yāmuna's *Śrī-Vaiṣṇava* and on his distinctive interpretation of that tradition.

In the first place, though the two never met, there was a mysterious spiritual bond, symbolised by the three bent fingers of Yāmuna's corpse which became straight when Rāmānuja dedicated himself to fulfilling the three desires of Yāmuna. One of these was the task of writing a *Bhāṣya* on the *Brahma-sūtras*. Then there is the fact that Rāmānuja came from a more Vedic-oriented background than the *Śrī-Vaiṣṇava-Sampradāya* of Yāmuna. On the other hand Rāmānuja's mother was the sister of Yāmuna's disciple, Periya Tirumalai Nambi, who had settled at Tirumalai. And Yāmuna, as well as Rāmānuja, was concerned to establish the Vedic orthodoxy of the Vaiṣṇava tradition. The fact remains, though, that his Vedāntic teachings gave much more prominence to the Vaiṣṇava *Āgamas* or *Pañcarātra* than we find in Rāmānuja.

In some places the tradition itself contrasts Rāmānuja's teaching with Yāmuna's. Carman finds such tradition especially "genuine and important."³⁶ An example of this is where "in the interests of logical consistency"³⁷ (and theological acceptability?) Rāmānuja cannot allow that Nammālvār moves from praise in one verse to displeasure with God in the next. The tradition also makes clear that Rāmānuja diverged in other ways from the teachings of Yāmuna's disciples, even when they were initiating him into their Guru's tradition. Then there are more examples than one of a less esoteric, more outward-looking attitude on Rāmānuja's part than seems to have been typical of the *Śrī-Vaiṣṇava* community prior to him. His reform measures illustrate this in general and the temple-tower proclamation of the secret mantras in particular. Some of his reforms aroused opposition among the more traditional members of the established vaiṣṇava community. No doubt this more outward-looking concern explains to a large extent Rāmānuja's use of more universally acceptable Vedāntic terms and his avoidance of the more specifically Vaiṣṇava features.

We conclude, therefore, that for important aspects of his teaching Rāmānuja was indebted to Yāmuna. It is even possible that within the more esoteric tradition Yāmuna used the *ātma-śarīra-bhāva* more fully than in his writings. In his *Gitārtha-saṃgraha*, however, there was no need for any such diffidence, as it must have been intended primarily for his own

community. The *Samgraha* shows nothing of that all-integrating *ātma-sarīra* viewpoint from which Rāmānuja interpreted virtually every aspect of the *Gītā*'s teaching, as we find in our next chapter.

(4) *Pañca-ratrā*: Three reasons, admittedly speculative, may be given for suggesting Rāmānuja's indebtedness to Pañcarātra, even for these central concepts of his ontology, the *ātma-sarīra* and *śeṣa-śeṣi-bhāvas*.

(a) The *Vyūha* and *Vibhava*⁸⁸ doctrines indicate that the Supreme Lord exists not only in his transcendent form, but emanates himself in manifest forms progressively more close to the *Jivas* and material existence. These manifestations, according to Rāmānuja, are prompted by the Lord's "affection for those who take refuge in him." The Lord "exists in himself and by his own will in a quadruple form in order to serve as a refuge for his devotees." (*Śrī-Bhāṣya* 2.2.41) Thus, the *Vyūha* concept symbolises the essential and manifest, related being of God.

(b) In Pañcarātra Upāsana before the *arca*-form of God is of great importance⁸⁹. Thus *bhakti* consists not only of spiritual surrender, but also of yogic discipline and regulated worship of God in his manifest, image-form. "Thus the Supreme Brahman called *Vāsudeva*, whose personality is constituted by the six qualities in full measure, the votaries will attain when they have worshipped him through acts following on knowledge, and each will attain him in proportion that he is qualified." (In this *upāsana* kind of *bhakti* the devotee is intensely preoccupied with the image form of God. This suggests the continual representation of the 'body' of God before the devotee. Could this be the hidden spring of Rāmānuja's teaching of the whole universe as comprising the body of God, and to the idea of God, even in his essential being, possessing an *aprākṛta* body?)

(c) The proper relationship between *Brahman* and *jīva*, according to an important strand of Pañcarātra, is that of *kainkarya*, or servitude⁹⁰. This master-servant relationship is typical even of souls which have attained *mukti*. As in life, so for

eternity the soul is to be in this relation of dependent subservience. Pañcarātra no doubt in places also suggests a relationship of non-difference. For Kumarappa this 'monism' is sufficient reason for Rāmānuja to find Pañcarātra, and *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* also, incompatible with his Viśist dvaita. But if Rāmānuja found no difficulty in using the 'monistic' passages of the Upaniṣads, why not Pañcarātra 'monism' especially when the former is dominated by *kainkarya-bhakti*? Is it unreasonable to suggest that this very *kainkarya-upāsana* attitude expected of the Pañcarātrin, especially in relation to the divine form manifest in the image, may have been a formative factor in the evolution of the *ātma-sarīra-bhāva*? For Rāmānuja sees the principal status of the body as that of *subservience* to the self.

CHAPTER IV THE ATMA-SARIRA-BHAVA IN THE GITA-BHASYA

The first conclusion to be reached upon a careful study of the *Gītā-Bhāṣya* is the extent to which Rāmānuja's exegesis follows quite naturally the actual teaching of the *Gītā*, especially in appreciating its scheme of a progressively increased revelation—from the Sāṅkhya-Yoga analysis of the *ātman* in the early chapters up to the overwhelming vision of God and the call to make his grace the basis of all life.¹ This faithful exegesis is all the more remarkable when we remember that at least twelve centuries had passed since the initial composition of the *Gītā*, and in the meantime another quite alien (Advaita) method of interpreting it had become well-established.²

There are, of course, various passages in the *Gītā* which suggest some kind of Advaita. The early chapters expound the idea of the *Ātman*'s transcendence over the body and the continual changes of nature, yoga^{2a} being the means by which the self realises its transcendent character. This is called 'buddhi-yoga', the self needing to become 'buddhi-yukta' (2.49-53). Such a person will then be 'ātmanyev' *ātmana tuṣṭaḥ*, or 'himself contented in Self alone' (2.55). At the same time, as he continues to exist in the body he continues to fulfil his life's duties (2.31-7; 3.19-26, 35). By carrying out these duties with no desire for the benefits they bring i.e., niṣ-kāma, he will be free from *karma-phala*.

At one stage of this self-realisation the *Ātman* is described as 'brahma-yoga-yuktī' *ātmā*; *brahma-nirvāṇam*, *brahma-bhuto-dhigacchati* (5.21, 24). Such a person is 'sarva-bhūta-stham-ātmānam'; *sarva-bhūtāni c'ātmāni* (6.27-29) Zaehner^{2b} describes this as a "pan-en-henic vision of all things in one and one in all". But the immediately following verses (6.30-1) show the intensely theistic climax to which this non-duality and

the previous *ātma kaivalya* state leads. Such a *yogi* is to see 'Me' everywhere, and see 'all in Me' (*mām paśyati sarvatra sarva ca may' paśyati*-6.30).

Earlier verses (2.60; 3.30; 4.11) afford glimpses of the culminating *bhakti*-relationship to come. From 6.14 onwards this becomes increasingly explicit. To be 'joined' with God is the end of all yogic self discipline in the *Gītā*.^{2c}

Of particular importance in the *Gītā-Bhāṣya* is the *Śarīra-śarīrin* doctrine, which Rāmānuja repeatedly uses to explain the relationship of God to the universe. What is unusually striking is the manner in which he has so woven this theme into the commentary that virtually every major aspect of the *Gītā*'s teaching is made integral with it. The following are some of the *Gītā*'s ideas (some more prominent than others) integrated by Rāmānuja into his self-body analogy.

(1) Commenting on 3.11³ Rāmānuja writes that by sacrificing to the gods the devotee is in fact worshipping the Supreme God, "for the gods form God's body and God is their *ātman*."

(2) On 3.30-32⁴ concerning *Karma-yoga* and the need for freedom from the fruits of *karman* Rāmānuja writes: "...when it is realised that God can actuate the *ātman* because the *ātman* is God's body, then it is known that God is the performer of all acts. Therefore one should attribute all acts to God, without fostering any hopes for their results, but reflecting that the acts only serve to propitiate God."⁵ Thus it is, for Rāmānuja, the supreme knowledge that God is *Ātman* to his body the universe of *prakṛti* and *Jīvas* that the means of release from *samsāra* is afforded.

(3) This is clearly of immediate consequence for the teaching of the *Gītā*'s initial chapters on the proper knowledge of the *ātman* as distinct from *prakṛti* and the body, and the need to cast off that delusion which identifies the *ātman* with this *prakṛti*-body. But it is from chapter seven onwards that Rāmānuja sees a more complete answer to this question of the *ātman*'s proper essence, viz., that the individual souls are part

of God's "higher *prakṛti*", they are his "*śeṣas*" his "*prakāras*", and as such must recognise their true place as "constituting his body."⁶

(4) This leads naturally to the climactic doctrine of the *Gītā* that the *ātman* must through *bhakti* resort to God as his sole support. Thus on 7.19;⁷ "This *prapatti* or resorting to God presupposes the knowledge that the *ātman* is essentially a *śeṣa* of God."⁸

(5) Rāmānuja interprets any suggestion in the *Gītā* that the *ātman* is identical with *Brahman* in the characteristic terms of his *śarīra-śarīri-bhava*. In some places this leads him to express a relationship of virtual identity. For instance on 7.18,⁹ "The *jñānin* is regarded by God as himself; that means, God considers the maintenance of his own *ātman* to depend on his worshipper's *ātman*." Later, Vedānta Deśika interpreted this passage as "hyperbolic praise of the devotees of God."¹⁰ The nature of this identity is perhaps made more clear in the comment on 13.1,¹¹ "The *kṣetra-jña* is God, i.e. God is its proper form; the same is true of the *kṣetra*...(they) are merely constitutive of God's body. God is inner ruler of all *kṣetra-jñas* and therefore constitutes their *ātman*." There is an interesting comment on 9.15;¹² "Other high-minded believers worship God by paying homage to him...by performing the sacrifice of *jñāna*. What does that mean? The worship of God as the one underlying the individual plurality of things. This means that they worship God with the certain knowledge that God is one and that his body is constituted by the manifold creations." On 9.23,¹³ it is this knowledge which is said to be "the entire Vedānta."¹⁴

(6) A feature of the *Gītā*'s teaching considerably more prominent than the 'identity' passages is the emphasis on the transcendent character of God, which is of course exactly what Rāmānuja attempts to bring out when interpreting the 'identity' passages in terms of the *ātma-śarīra* idea. To stress this he even puts a limit to the extent to which the analogy is applicable. Preceding the comment cited above on 7.18,¹⁵ he writes thus: "God himself is modified by all these entities of which he is *ātman*... God himself however does not depend

on them. The relation of God to his body is not the same as that of the individual *ātmans* to their bodies." For God, the universe (his body) does not serve any particular *prayojana*,¹⁶ it is not needed by him to achieve any particular end, being the product of his spontaneous *līlā*, this being another concept used to express the transcendently free character of God. That the relation of God to his body is in no way one of necessity is brought out in a further passage on 9.4.6;¹⁷ "All beings depend on God because they constitute his body. But God does not depend on them, for they serve no purpose in maintaining his being; nor does God contain these beings like a jug contains water. How then does God pervade them? In virtue of his will—Behold his *yoga*, miraculous and peculiar to him alone; God supports all beings, but no being is of use to him."¹⁸ Here it is emphasised that God's all pervasive presence as *ātman* within his body in no way limits his freedom. His presence is not to be located in the body in any crudely spatial manner, which would then place him in a relation of dependence on the body. So Rāmānuja brings in the notion of God's transcendent will, which though at first may seem to be the exact opposite of the *līlā* idea, used to avoid any sense of an end needed to be achieved, is in fact very similar in meaning. Both imply that while the body is dependent on God, there is nothing reciprocal in this relationship, for the relationship only exists by virtue of a free exercise of the Supreme person's will that is in no way necessitated by any influence outside the will itself.

(7) It is obvious, however, that the *Gītā* gives considerable prominence to the idea of the pervasive immanence of God within the universe even though it is consistently indicated that this presence is ubiquitous and not spatially locatable. In the *Srī-Bhāṣya*¹⁹ it is stated that the soul is atomic in size, though this is said not to limit its influence throughout the whole body. The soul is like a drop of sandalwood ointment and light, both of which have the property of pervasiveness.

That the soul is atomic at all does not appear so clearly in the *Gītā-Bhāṣya*, and Rāmānuja seems to take the subtly pervasive character of the soul's existence within the body as a

clue to God's relationship with the universe, For instance on chapter 13²⁰, where the relation of *Kṣetra-jña* to *Kṣetra* is explained, he writes of *Kṣetra-jña* or *jivātman* that it is said to be "subject to God, of whom it is a *śeṣa* distinguishable from and not circumscribable by the body. In its pure form (it) is able to perform the tasks of hands and feet, of eyes, etc., completely; it is present in everything because it cannot be determined by space etc.," On 13. 32-33²¹ however, Rāmānuja suggests a similarity between *ātman* and space; "The *ātman* may be compared to space; albeit associated with all substances, space is too subtle to be contaminated by their modes of existence. The *Kṣetrin* illuminates the entire *Kṣetra*, within and without, by its own light, like the sun illuminates the entire world. And even as the illuminating sun is entirely different from the illuminated world, so the knowing *ātman* is totally different from his *kṣetra*." It is with this view of the soul-body relationship in mind that Rāmānuja is then able to illustrate God's immanent presence in the universe and interpret it in what amounts to terms of transcendence. Thus on the passage in 10.20-39²² which superficially appears to suggest a pantheistic identity of God with the empirical universe; "From the fact that God exists as the inner *ātman* of all beings which constitute his dominion it results that God may be called by the names of all these beings in functional co-ordination²³... So among the *ādityas* he is the paramount one, Viṣṇu; among all luminaries he is the Sun, etc. In short,; he is the core,²⁴ whether manifest or not, of all beings in whatever condition they exist. The totality of beings, mobile or immobile, cannot exist apart from God who is the *ātman* within themselves."

(8) In the passage from which citation is made immediately above it also emerges that is by virtue of his relation to the universe as of *ātman* to *śarīra* that God is able to direct and control the universe. So on 10.20;²⁵ "God states explicitly that he governs all beings by actuating them - which he is able to do because he exists as their inner *ātman* - and that he is the one who creates, maintains and destroys them. God is the *ātman* in all beings which constitute his body, and the *ātman* is the support, the ruler and the *śeṣin* of the body."

(9) This concept is closely related to that of *Brahman* as material and efficient cause of the universe of souls and nature, both ideas being another clear aspect of the Gita's teaching, and both being connected by Rāmānuja to his *śarīra śarīrin* analogy. Kumarappa²⁶ claims that in the Upaniṣads this idea of the *Brahman* universe relationship as a soul-body relationship cannot be said to include the notion of *Brahman* as material cause. Whether this is true of Upaniṣadic thinking and of the analogy as such or not, Rāmānuja finds it possible at least to relate causal ideas to the analogy.²⁷ on 13.1²⁸ he states that "the *śruti*²⁹ asserts that, in whatever condition *cit* and *acit* or subject and object exist, their existence depends on God, because they constitute his body and are internally ruled by him, and that God is their *ātman*. This is also the meaning of the *śrutis*³⁰ which state that God himself is the world whether as a cause or as an effect; for *cit* and *acit*, which exist as cause or as effect, constitute God's body. So God is effect when both *cit* and *acit* substances, which constitute his body, are in their gross, evolved condition, and he is cause, when both are in their subtle, unevolved condition." In other words it is just because the universe is God's body, that God in his substantial though not essential being is able to form the material cause of the universe. As essential *ātman* he is efficient cause who is able to effectuate the change from subtle to evolved state in the world.

(10) Special attention should be given to the *sāmānādhikarāṇya* concept,³¹ for although this primarily arises out of Rāmānuja's interpretation of the logic of the structure of language, it is used both as an epistemological and an ontological idea. It cannot be said to be explicit in the *Gītā*'s teaching, but Rāmānuja uses it to show the two-fold way in which the body 'identifies', and is thus of invaluable service to him in bringing out the two-fold aspect of the *Gītā*'s teaching in which God is declared to be both identical with and other than the universe. In other words, the body can be both identified with the self and yet is also to be seen as the identifying or particularising characteristic related to a self and hence different from that self. Van Buitenen translates the term as 'functional co-ordination',³² that is, two functionally

differentiating terms which are co-ordinated in one substantial entity. On 13.1,⁸³ Rāmānuja writes: 'This body, though it may be put in *Sāmāna-adhikarāṇya* with the experiencing *ātman*, e.g., in the proposition 'I am lean' etc., is different from the latter...A person who knows his body and, because of his very knowledge, must be different from his body which is the object of his knowledge, is called a *kṣetra-jña*... One may conceive of the *ātman* to be in a relation of *sāmāna-adhikarāṇya* to the body in as much as both are indissolubly connected⁸⁴ for the body serves to particularise an *ātman* as belonging to a certain class...likewise both *kṣetra* and *kṣetra-jña* may be put in *sāmāna-adhikarāṇya* with God, because it is the sole nature of both to particularise God, *kṣetra* and *kṣetra-jña* are constitutive of God's body. God is the inner ruler of all *kṣetra-jñas* and therefore constitutes their *ātman*, so they may be put in *sāmāna-adhikarāṇya* with God."⁸⁵

(11) Of the doctrine of the divine *avatār* there can be little doubt; its implications in the *Gītā* as a whole are immense. Commenting on 9.11⁸⁶ Rāmānuja describes Krishna's incarnation in this way: "Urged on by this compassion for mankind, God has assumed a human body so that he might be the refuge of all men; but they do not know him as he is. They consider him to be a man like they are, and they are ignorant of God's supreme state of being which is a boundless receptacle of compassion, generosity, goodness, love, etc., and is characterised by a human shape." So also on 7.23⁸⁷ where likewise Rāmānuja makes a significant comparison between men's ignorance of Krishna's divine body and their delusion concerning the fact that they constitute the body of God. Again these two body-concepts are the basis for their resorting to God in the *bhakti* relationship. The parallelism is brought out clearly when he comments on 11.2.⁸⁸ There is first a brief summary of what Arjuna has already been taught, viz., "God's eternal greatness consists in this—that all spiritual and non-spiritual entities constitute a *śeṣa* of God, that God is the Supreme One because of his beautiful qualities...and that God is the inner actuator of all beings. Now Arjuna desires to have direct presentation of God in his form all of sovereign, creator, maintainer and dissolver of all entities...Therefore he

beseeches God to reveal himself completely to him in all these forms." God responds thus: "Behold the entire universe with its mobile and immobile beings concentrated in this one body of Mine." So he manifests himself as transcendent Lord of the universe, whose being includes the whole within itself, just as a person includes his body yet transcends the body (by which he is empirically identified) through his self.

The passages cited above seem to provide sufficient evidence that in his exegesis of the principal tenets of the *Gītā*, in virtually every case Rāmānuja makes his interpretation of the text dependent upon, or at least integrally related to, this prior concept of the *Sarīra-sarīrin* relationship. Though it is equally important in *Srī-Bhāṣya*, in *Gītā-Bhāṣya* Rāmānuja is able to place it in a considerably more coherent relation both with the subject matter of the text and to his development of the exegesis of the text. This may in part be due to the very nature of the respective texts, i.e., the analogy is intrinsic to the *Gītā* but not to the *Sūtras*. We find that it is this analogical doctrine which provides the integrating basis of the *Vedārtha-saṃgraha* also in which there is no particular text to dominate the development of the argument. In so far as the *Sūtras* and the *Gītā* are the only two texts he wrote commentaries on, the impression is given that Rāmānuja's interpretation of the *Gītā* is in a special way related to this formative *ātman-sarīra* doctrine of Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita system.

But before we can draw any conclusion about *Gītā* as a possible source of this concept which became formative for Rāmānuja's theism, we need to ascertain how far it can be said to be in any way essential to the *Gītā* itself, though this question need not be taken as crucial for what Rāmānuja may have read from the *Gītā*. The important sections to be considered are 7.5-12; 9.4-6; 10.39-42; 11.7,13-15; a study of which shows that a number of passages in the *Gītā* are in line with the general intention underlying and indicated by the *ātman-sarīra* concept. 7.5-13⁸⁹ for example, expresses in various ways that the supreme being is the *soul* of all existence and that all creation is included within this immanently-transcendent God. "All that is here is strung on me as rows of gems on a string."⁹⁰ (7.7) "Know me to be the eternal

seed of all existences. I am the intelligence of the intelligent ; I am the splendour of the splendid." (7.10)⁴¹ 'Whatever states of being there my be...they are all from Me alone. I am not in them, they are in me.'⁴² (7.12) '...this whole world does not recognise me who am above them and imperishable.'⁴³ (7.13) And more specifically in 9.4-6⁴⁴ e.g., "By me all this universe is pervaded through my unmanifested form. All being abide in me, but I do not abide in them."⁴⁵ (9.4) and again in 10.42; "I support this entire universe, pervading it with a single fraction of myself."⁴⁶

Of much greater significance, however, is that climactic passage of the *Gītā* as a whole, chapter eleven, in which Arjuna is granted the majestic revelation of God.⁴⁷ For it is in this passage that, as we saw reflected in Rāmānuja's commentary, it is shown that the whole universe is contained in the divine body revealed to Arjuna. So in 11.7; "Behold the whole universe... all unified in my body."⁴⁸ This is repeated in various ways in 11.13; 11.15; 11.16; and 11.18; In these latter two texts the incarnate God is called 'Viśveśvara', 'Viśvarūpa', 'Viśvasya-param-nidhānam.' In view of the parallel emphasis on the transcendent character of this God whose body forms the whole universe, it is impossible to take this as simply teaching an undifferentiated pantheism. The essential supreme being is consistently regarded as more than the universe which is seen as forming his body. And although there may be no explicit elaboration of the self-body concept in the exact manner in which Rāmānuja reads it from the text, the fact that in this climactic chapter the universe is so emphatically and repeatedly declared to be contained within the body of God must have made a great impression upon one so clearly committed to the tenets of the *Gītā*. That Ramanuja possibly wrote the *Gītā-Bhāṣya* at a stage later in his life than either *Vedārtha-saṃgraha* or *S'ri Bhāṣya* (though about the latter there is room for doubt) does not vitally affect the issue.

In view of the above considerations it is rather difficult to understand how Kumarappa, in his survey of the *Gītā* as possible source material for Rāmānuja's characteristic doctrines can conclude⁴⁹ that "the doctrine of repeated creation" and

"the view that creation proceeds in the main according to the stages enumerated by Sāṃkhya philosophy" were the only two "details" which may have been taken direct from the *Gītā*, and even these ideas may have been derived from the later Upaniṣads.

Van Buitenen⁵⁰ is correct in drawing attention to the complex mutual relationship of the *Gītā* to the *bhakti* religious tradition generally, and to Rāmānuja in particular as being within the orbit of that tradition. He rightly emphasises that at the time of Rāmānuja and for some time prior to this, there had been an interplay of various traditions. Even before the time of the *Gītā*'s appearance and as the inspiration of its synthesis of ideas, there was a variety of religious and metaphysical currents moving within its inclusive milieu. Van Buitenen finds it impossible to determine with any confidence what is direct *Gītā*'s influence upon this diffuse scene and what merely the continuing interplay of those various religious and metaphysical currents which initially inspired the *Gītā*'s composition. But he does suggest⁵¹ that "many tenets of Rāmānuja's system were not so much directly inspired by the *Gītā* (as) by the very undercurrent of popular religiosity by which the *Gītā* itself had been inspired." Apart from the dubious reference to "religiosity", Van Buitenen's suggestion here may well be true. But when it is possible to identify so many of the central features of Rāmānuja's system as corresponding so exactly with the central features of the *Gītā*, why look further to the more general religious background for this inspiration? Should it be replied that it was this complex religious *sitz im leben* which would naturally prove more influential than any one particular scripture, it is relevant to point out that we have already shown the considerable differences between Rāmānuja's thought and the general tenor of his Vaiṣṇava milieu, even in its more theistically disciplined expression as provided by Yāmuna.

In the end, therefore, we are thrown back upon the original systematising genius of Rāmānuja himself, and upon the intrinsically comprehensive character of the self-body concept which he chose (from whichever source) as the formative feature

of his system. Perhaps it should here be stressed that Rāmanuja consistently uses the concept in a properly *analogical* manner, in distinction from the generally *mythological*^{5,2} place it holds in the traditions prior to Rāmanuja, with the possible exception of Yāmuna (and Nyāya). Rāmanuja is prepared, for example, to concede that there are certain ways in which the self-body analogy is not applicable to the *Brahman*-universe relationship. We shall discuss further in the final chapter the relevance of such an analogical approach to theism. But our immediate aim in the following five chapters is to probe into the connection between Rāmanuja and the more prominent 'Schools' of the Indian philosophic tradition^{5,3}. In general this relationship will be found to be one of polemical debate, especially as the material we examine is mainly those *S'ri-Bhāṣya* passages where Rāmanuja clarifies the distinguishing features of his own position in relation to the other systems. For this very reason such a procedure proves most helpful in establishing just what are the essential characteristics of Viśiṣṭādvaita. Moreover, we shall no doubt find other less openly expressed areas of underlying divergence and convergence, both of which may contribute a little more to our understanding of the really formative factors in Rāmanuja's teaching.

CHAPTER V

RAMANUJA AND PURVA-MIMAMSA

It would be reasonable to assume that Pūrva-Mimāmsa, with its absence of significant theism, stands in such extreme opposition to theistic Vedānta as to preclude fruitful comparison. Any such impression would be a mistaken one, if only for the reason that all Uttara-Mimāmsa, or Higher-Vedic-Exegesis, begins with the conclusions of the Previous-Exegesis, the school of extreme orthodoxy concerned with the proper interpretation of Vedic ritual (*karma-kāṇḍa*.) This is precisely where the *Vedānta-sūtras* and their commentators begin. But how differently they interpret the introductory "Then, therefore" of the first Sūtra. For all Vedāntins it is a reference to "what has taken place", meaning the *karma-kāṇḍa* of the Vedic Tradition. But for Rāmanuja, as against Sankara, the "enquiry" (*Jijñāsa*) into *Brahman*, of which the whole Vedāntic exercise consists, follows on inevitably from this previous-Mimāmsa.¹ Indeed, the two form halves of one great body of doctrine,² with the prior-Mimāmsa qualifying the person for the higher-Mimāmsa in two ways. (a) The discipline of ritual duty, especially when performed from a desire only to please God and for no other benefits, "purifies" the mind and prepares it for the "steady remembrance" required of the Vedāntic student.³ (b) It is also conducive to "the discrimination of permanent and non-permanent" things⁴ and in particular "the knowledge that the fruit of mere works is limited and non-permanent."⁵

In fact, when it is suggested that a person who has this knowledge should be able to go on immediately to this "enquiry into *Brahman*", Rāmanuja replies that a "systematic enquiry into religious duty" is just as necessary to the knowledge of *Brahman* as this *jñānā-kāṇḍa* is to *karma-kāṇḍa*.⁶ For in that such 'knowledge' is to be understood essentially in terms of *upāsana*, *dhyāna* and of course pre-eminently *bhakti*, this implies some degree of objectively apprehendable character on

Brahman's part. This in turn suggests that some determinable performance is required on the part of the *bhakta*. He is engaging in action as a *karta* or effective agent, which implies that this meditative relationship with the Supreme Person could be made the object of scriptural injunction (*vidhi*), and as such be of the nature of a '*kārya*' or 'thing to be done' in the Mimamsa sense.

To this extent Rāmānuja's position shows an affinity with what is the totally determining basis of the Mimāmsa school, an affinity which is certainly not shared by Sankara, as we shall see.⁷ In Rāmānuja's case, one of the complicating factors is the very nature of the 'object' of devotion. For while in an ontological sense he refuses to allow the 'pure-subject' notion to be applied to *Brahman*,⁸ yet in a theological sense this notion does find some expression in his teaching of the Lord as the Ruler⁹ (*niyanta*), by whose permission (*anumati*) alone the soul is able to act as effective agent.¹⁰ The idea that the Lord takes the initiative in prompting the soul towards himself and then receives the soul graciously, results in some ambiguity regarding the soul's status, as in most theological schemes.¹¹ In this context, for example, he states¹² that "a 'chosen'¹³ means a most beloved person; the relation being that he by whom that self is held most dear is most dear to the self...he who possesses remembrance,¹⁴ marked by the character of immediate presentation (*sākṣātkāra*),¹⁵ and which itself is dear above all things since the object remembered is such; he, we say, is chosen by the highest self, and by him the highest self is gained.¹⁶ Steady remembrance¹⁷ of this kind is designated by the word 'devotion' (*bhakti*)". Here at least, there is no theological version of the 'pure subject', and indeed the whole intention of the passage is to confirm that "of such steady remembrance sacrifices and so on are means...and hence all the works connected with the different conditions of life (and the different *āśramas*) are to be performed throughout life for the purpose of originating such knowledge."¹⁸

In this sense, Rāmānuja can be said to be more conservative than Sankara (as we noted in the previous chapter when considering their respective exegetical principles). While, for both, it is the ancient *karma-kāṇḍa* which forms the inescapable

social and religious background, because of his transcendental *pāramārthika* doctrine Sankara sits more lightly to his environment. For him, *jñāna* is essentially a point beyond the apex to which *karma* and even *bhakti* can elevate the soul. For Rāmānuja; the *bhakti*-relationship is the determinable apex, the culminating stage to which *karma* and *jñāna* can lead, though neither of these preceding stages is to be discarded. Perhaps it could even be said that this culminating relationship is in reality a recapitulation or gathering up of what is inherent in both *karma-kāṇḍa* and *jñāna-kāṇḍa*. Hence the contention that Viśiṣṭādvaita is a "comprehensive synthesis".

The debate with the Mimamsaka schools is, however, complicated and before we trace the more important strands in the debate as it appears in *Srī-Bhāṣya* and *Vedārtha-Saṃgraha*, it would be well to outline some more prominent features of Mimamsaka. Of the six *darśanas* it could perhaps be said that this school is the most strictly self-consistent and most closely integrated to its central thesis, viz., that the end of cosmic existence is the proper performance of the ritual. Because most writers on Indian Philosophy tend to ignore what appears to be the more 'non-philosophic' elements in the Indian religious tradition, it is not always easy to see what comprises the cohering centre of any particular school.¹⁹ It would, for example, be extremely difficult to identify the formative basis of Pūrva-Mimāmsa from a study of the chapter devoted to this school in Hiriyanna's *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*,²⁰ or even from Dasgupta's section on the school,²¹ and this despite the fact that its basis so totally determines the character of the whole system.

In order to provide an adequate ontological basis for the all-determining concept that the performance of ritual in itself is the 'end' of existence, Mimāmsaka postulates the eternal nature of the Vedas. And as the notion of a rhythmically recurring creation would imply the dissolution and re-emergence of the Vedas (and the sacrificial system), the universe must be regarded as eternally static. Such *pariṇāma*-modification as is admissible (in order perhaps to ensure that the sacrificial performance be said to be 'effective') not being thought of

as effecting any essential change. Mimāṃsa is the only orthodox school thus to deny the *śṛṣṭi-sthiti-pralaya* cycle.²² Inevitably, there can be no place for a Creator in such a system, for it is on the ritual performance alone that creation is dependent. It will be recognised just how strong must have been the influence of this school in the establishment of Brahmanical orthodoxy following the Buddhist movement's success.

To preserve the integrity and self-validity of the Vedic injunctions to sacrifice, all knowledge is thought of *svataḥ-prāmāṇya*²³ or subject to no other canon of verification but its own self-validity. It was natural that Advaita would later make use of this concept, in view of its (in a limited sense) corresponding transcendental view of *Brahman* and the knowledge of *Brahman*, whereas Rāmānuja uses the *parataḥ-prāmāṇya* postulated by the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school. Dasgupta²⁴ claims that it is this "doctrine of the self-validity of knowledge (which) forms the cornerstone on which the whole structure of the Mimāṃsaka-philosophy is based." Perhaps it may rightly be called a 'cornerstone' to the constructed philosophic edifice, but as we have already seen, it could not be called the foundation of the edifice itself. For all knowledge-experience is but a means of better understanding the Vedic injunctions, of which all ultimate knowledge is comprised.²⁵

The Vedas, moreover, are essentially 'injunctive' in intention, as has already become clear. They point, either directly or indirectly to a duty (*vidhi*) to be performed. Thus even those texts which appear to relate to the gods or to *Brahman* cannot be taken as objective statements about such beings. They are merely descriptive details about the nature of the particular sacrifice to which the text is related, or possibly to the nature of the soul of the performer of the sacrifice. Thus, although in later Mimāṃsa²⁶ the thought that the sacrifice may be "pleasing to God" is introduced as an added incentive to the performance of the duty, in the earlier Mimāṃsa²⁷ '*Brahman*' is regarded as identical with the soul in a kind of existential sense. Such identity does not become properly ontological however, because the consequence of this would logically be an *eka-jīva* view of the soul. An injunction is expected to be

performed by the hearer of the injunction, or by the '*niyojya*' (i.e. the person who finds that the injunction is incumbent upon him and has aroused a sense of duty (*niyoga*) in him, thus qualifying him for such performance.) Therefore the soul is given an eternally individual existence. Again, however, we should note that in later Mimāṃsa²⁸ there was a tendency to discard the earlier Vedic notion of the attainment of *Svarga* (heaven), and an acceptance of the more 'Vedāntic' concept of the attainment of *Mokṣa* or release from the bondage of *samsāra* and the ties of materiality.²⁹ "So...salvation is the state in which the self remains devoid of any of its characteristic qualities such as pleasure, pain, knowledge (this being in essence *jñāna-śakti* or 'potency of knowledge'), willing etc...(all) these are generated in it by its energy and the operation of the senses." Thus when *mokṣa* replaces *svarga*, the notions relating to action undergo a corresponding change. The consequence of good and bad actions naturally have to be exhausted, but there is also the need to refrain from all, '*kāmya-karmas*' or those sacrifices prompted by the desire for some beneficial result. A person should perform only '*nitya-karmas*' or such duties as bring about no positive result, but the omission of which would permit sin to accumulate. In this view *mokṣa* is the state in which there are no further forces making for the embodiment of the soul and thus no further possibility of rebirth.

Three points in which Rāmānuja's teaching shows considerable affinity with fundamental concepts of Mimāṃsa may be noted:

(1) *Pratyakṣa* or perception is taken by Mimāṃsa in a realistic way, consonant with the 'pragmatic' view taken of the Vedas and the ritual to which they witness. Thus, even that initial perception of an object which does not clearly reveal it to us in all its detail is sufficient to form the basis of action on our part. In this way there is complete continuity between *nirvikalpa* (indeterminate) and *savikalpa* (determinate) perception.³⁰ The difference is merely due to lack of ability to correlate all the details of perception and classify in relation to other known things. So for the time being those details remain

perceived but not fully cognised. In any case, "as soon as knowledge is produced objects are revealed to us."³¹ Prabhākara thus takes a view called *tri-puti-samvit*, in which it is thought that the knowing subject, the known object and the knowledge between them are given simultaneously in every act of knowing. He disagrees here with Kumārila in contending that the self is only known in such acts of knowledge. But whatever may be the variations in interpreting the act of knowing, it is agreed in Mimāṃsa that objects of knowledge are entirely real, thus providing a sufficiently substantial basis for the performance of action.

It is clear that these ideas of perception and the reality of the objective world are followed in general by Rāmānuja, who is "an advocate of extreme realism" for whom "objects are regarded as prior to knowledge³² and the act of knowledge functions to bring them into relation with the knowing subject."³³

(2) In explanation of mistaken identity,³⁴ as when a shell is seen as silver or a rope as a snake, Mimāṃsa propounds the doctrine of *A-khyāti*, which is again entirely consistent with what is a basically objective realism. "*Yathārtham sarva-vijñānam*" "All knowledge is genuine",³⁵ even though subsequent knowledge may prove that at some point a mistake occurred in that act of cognising the shell as silver. But the mistake is not so much one of illusory perception, for the perception in itself was no doubt correct, but rather one of mistaken identity. That is to say, both the presented object (the shell) and the represented idea (the silver) were in themselves quite valid. The mistake occurred when the two were related, the locus of error thus being in that particular sense organ by which a perceiving person relates perception to memory and thus makes identification-cognitions. We may note that Kumārila's *viparīta-khyāti* idea differs from this in being somewhat less realistic, perhaps influenced by the *anyathā-khyāti* notion of Nyāya Vaiśeṣika.

It is obvious that Rāmānuja's *sat-khyāti*³⁶ view of mistaken identity corresponds very closely to the Mimāṃsa *a-khyāti* doctrine, though the terms suggest a contradictory view point,

What we may note for the present is what Bhattacharya³⁷ calls the "pragmatic" basis of the arguments used by Rāmānuja to differentiate what proves to be mistaken identity and what is "empirically valid perception." Both are in fact related to the objectively real and as such could be called valid perceptions. That is to say, when a shell is seen as silver this is precisely because of the element of silver to be seen in that kind of shell.³⁸ But when on further evidence we say that this was an "illusion", we do not mean to deny all reality to the perception, we merely mean that what was perceived in practice did not prove useful, as e.g., silver. The distinction of truth and error is thus significant only from the pragmatic standpoint...True knowledge, according to the Rāmānujaists, is not only '*yathārtha*' or agreeing with outside reality, but also '*vyavahāra-anugūṇa*' or confirming to practical interest in life."³⁹

Perhaps too much weight should not be given to this particular aspect of Rāmānuja's interpretation of *Pratyakṣa* and *jñāna*, for the acceptance of what appears in objects in general out-weighs such consideration of what the self experiences as useful through such objects. Nevertheless there is in other aspects of Rāmānuja's thought also this emphasis on the functional validity of any given thing. Even in his exposition of '*sat-khyāti*', dream-experience, normally problematic for the realist, is interpreted as a special creation of God which is of use to the soul.⁴⁰

(3) The Mimāṃsa notion of *śabda* was another way of attempting to give a stronger basis to its theory of Vedic injunctions. Every verbal utterance was considered to be objectively efficacious, and in particular of course the utterance of the Vedic formulae. The force (inherent in the meaning) of any given word was not a result of convention or the repeated use of that particular word in connection with that particular object or intention. The potency of that word was thought to have been intrinsic to it from eternity. We may note that there was some disagreement on this point between Prabhākara and Kumārila. Prabhākara equates authoritative *śabda*, or the eternally potent language structures, with the Vedas, making

all other forms of verbal communication to be of the nature of inference, dependent upon transcendent *śabda*. Moreover, such *śabda* invariably has the character of *sādhya*, or that which is to be accomplished, as against *siddha*, that which is already accomplished. This, says Hiriyanṇa,⁴¹ is "in keeping with the pragmatic view he takes of all knowledge." Kumārila, on the other hand, held that all forms of reliable verbal statement carry this potency. But while ordinary language may point either to *siddha* or to *sādhya*, either to a fact which is established or a task to be performed the *śabda* of the Vedas must always point to what has to be done.⁴² Thus, in any case, both see *kārya*, or that which is to be done, as the "final import of the Veda." And in either case, any other form of language can only be said to be complementary to the Vedic word. This theory of *śabda* is thus the basis of the more practical notion of the Vedas as injunctive, leading to a duty (*vidhi*) to be done. No doubt this Mimāṃsa idea of language, in particular scriptural language, as intrinsically potent underlies much of Rāmānuja's thinking.⁴³

We shall now turn to those passages in *Śrī-bhāṣya*, with supplementary references to *Vedārtha-Saṃgraha*, in which Rāmānuja joins in debate with Mimāṃsa. Then we shall try to deduce on what grounds he argues his case against their doctrine of injunction and its complements.

(1) It has already been noted that Rāmānuja⁴⁴ argues against any suggestion that in so far as *avidyā* is put an end to by the acquiring of the knowledge of *Brahman*, any person is qualified to embark on such a study-course. His case was based on the notion characteristic of Rāmānuja that this *jñāna* is really of the nature of *upāsana* or meditation, involving steady remembrance, which is only possible on the part of those qualified, at least in part, by the previous discipline and discriminatory stimulus of *karma-kāṇḍa*. As we noted, this could imply that *Brahma-jñāna* exists in the same category though on a more elevated plane, as *karma-kāṇḍa*, and therefore could also be thought of as the possible object of injunction. In fact, by an initial analysis of the etymology and semantics of the first Sūtra, "*athāto brahma-jijñāsa*,"

Rāmānuja suggests that 'enquiry' into the object *Brahman* is 'enjoined' in precisely the same manner as 'enquiry' into the Vedas is enjoined in the *Pūrva-Mimāṃsa-Sūtras*.⁴⁵ For the Kevala-Advaitin this would be a quite unacceptable limiting of *Brahman's* transcendence.

(2) Rāmānuja is content to emphasise that "the desired object" is the chief thing,⁴⁶ and at the outset this 'objective' character of *Brahman*, the highest person, is depicted in terms of superlative 'moral' transcendence.⁴⁷ He "is essentially free from all imperfections and possesses numberless classes of auspicious qualities of unsurpassable excellence." It is then admitted that the term '*Brahman*' can be used of "any things which possess the quality of greatness", but it is emphasised that the word "primarily denotes that which possesses greatness, of essential nature as well as of qualities, in unlimited fulness; and such is only the Lord of all."⁴⁸ This is said to be 'analogous' to the term *bhagavat*, another name greatly loved in theistic religion in India.⁴⁹ So it has now been established that *Brahman* may be thought of as the object of meditation and that this meditation can be the object of injunction on the part of scriptures. Rāmānuja thus shows at least some affinity with Mimāṃsa's view point.

(3) In the extensive *samanvaya-adhikaraṇa*⁵⁰ also⁵¹ the question is raised whether *Brahman* can be regarded as an object of injunction. Van Buitenen contends⁵² that in *Vedārtha-Saṃgraha* Rāmānuja allows that "to serve God would be imperative indeed, it is the *parama-puruṣa-artha*, the supreme end to be achieved." In this sense *jñāna-kāṇḍa* and thus *Brahman* can be thought of as the object of injunction. But Van Buitenen holds that this position "has been abandoned in the *Śrī-Bhāṣya*", and he cites the following passage from the *samanvaya-adhikaraṇa*,⁵³ the *śāstras* "can and do bear completely and harmoniously on the *Brahman*...eminently possessed of unlimited perfections, and in essence, boundless and incomparable bliss. Thus they serve no purpose conducive to activity or inactivity and therefore do not bear on any other purport."⁵⁴ For all *pramāṇas* terminate, not in a purpose, but in the knowledge of the objects with which

they are concerned.⁵⁵ Nor is the operation of a *pramāṇa* determined by a purpose.⁵⁶ On the contrary, the purpose is determined by the knowledge resulting from the *pramāṇa*. Nor does the fact that the *pramāṇa* has no direct connection with activity or inactivity mean that it is devoid of all purpose, for we see that it is related to any one of the goals of human life.⁵⁷

(4) There does appear to be something of a new point of view propounded here, seemingly close to Sankara's position regarding the knowledge of *Brahman* and the way in which *paramārtha* scripture leads to that knowledge. But what Rāmānuja says, and why he says it should be noted rather carefully. His starting-point is the unchanging perfection of *Brahman* the transcendent, which gives us a clue to his intention. If such a perfect being is to be the object of scriptural statement, Rāmānuja seems to concede that this must be pure statement, complete itself, without any further reference to some action beyond the knowledge acquired of the object of the statement. Such complete knowledge of a perfect *Brahman* is the terminal⁵⁸ point of such statements. The introduction of some further purpose anterior to this knowledge would mar the perfection both of the statement and *Brahman* the object of the statement. The only fitting end to acquiring the knowledge of the perfect being is adoration or "continual remembrance."

(5) There is, therefore, a possible reconciliation of this concession to an almost Sankara-style transcendentalism and Rāmānuja's previous position⁵⁹ that the *śāstras* do enjoin meditation. Perfect *Brahman*, and knowledge of this perfect being is the final goal of human life⁶⁰. This is the meaning of the *samanvaya-sūtra*: the authority of scripture consists in its providing the 'connexion' between man and this his ultimate goal. But in that meditation is also required by man in order to attain this final goal, or the perfect knowledge of perfect *Brahman*, then various scriptures enjoin meditation alongside of their statements about the perfect Being.

(6) The question then arises: does Rāmānuja here fall back on Sankara's idea of major and minor texts, a concept

which certainly bears some resemblance⁶¹ to the Mīmāṃsaka distinction between pure *vidhi* and *artha-vāda* texts? No. For Rāmānuja there is certainly no question of scriptural grades. He merely allows that a *pramāṇa*-text having knowledge of *Brahman* as its direct object, in so far as it provides that knowledge cannot be injunctive. But that injunctions to meditation upon this perfect being may be connected with the direct knowledge and may comprise an equally authoritative part of scripture, is not here contradicted. In any case, on the Mīmāṃsaka front Rāmānuja's concern is to establish that the perfect being is the knowable subject of scripture and so the Supreme Person is the perfect object of meditation.

(7) In the first *Adhikaraṇa*'s Great-Pūrvapakṣa and Great-Siddhānta, or debate with Advaita, it is contended that *Brahman* can never be thought of as pure consciousness, pure-reality, or pure-knowledge.⁶² Rāmānuja argues that when texts do speak of *Brahman* as pure-knowledge, what is meant is that while knowledge is of the essential nature of *Brahman*, there is still a "knowing subject" which is the substrate of this essential nature.⁶³ Such an account of *Brahman* further confirms the view that he can be regarded as the object of meditation, as enjoined by scripture. For it entails the view that *Brahman* is neither 'pure subject' nor 'pure-knowledge' in the Advaitin's sense.⁶⁴

(8) It is in the final section⁶⁵ of this first *adhikaraṇa* that Rāmānuja turns specifically to repudiate Prabhākara's theory of *śabda* as being necessarily imperative in character. Prabhākara, as we have seen, says that speech can signify something to people only in so far as it refers to some action to be done. In that *Brahman* must be by nature a *siddha* rather than a *sādhya*, how can the Vedānta-texts "claim the position of authoritative means of knowledge (*pramāṇas*) with regard to *Brahman*?"⁶⁶ A number of possible objections are then brushed aside, including among others: (a) the suggestion that on occasion "accomplished facts" (e.g., a son's birth) are to be validly inferred from "certain outward signs" (e.g., "a pleased expression"); (b) that negative states of mind (e.g., loss of fear) are sometimes the consequence of learning of the non-existence

of something (e.g., a snake); (c) that the particular words in a sentence "possess the power of denoting their own meaning only, in connexion with the meaning of the other words of the sentence"; (d) that "what moves to action is not the idea of the thing to be done, but the idea of the means to do it." There is no need here to examine all the reasons adduced for the rejection of these possible objections to the injunctive theory of scripture, in which it is denied that *Brahman* can be a valid object of knowledge, being non-injunctionable.

Rāmānuja's own argument against this theory takes the following lines.⁶⁷ He first questions the theory of language and learning upon which the doctrine rests. It is nonsense to claim that all valid language must express those duties which the Vedas claim are 'to be done', and that only thus can valid, meanings be deduced from the Vedic injunctions. Children in fact relate words and meanings in experience in a very different way from this, says Rāmānuja, though it may be admitted that such connection of words and meanings is no mere convention. Thus he accepts the basic Mimāṃsa theory of *śabda*, but rejects Prabhākara's view that valid *śabda* is invariably Vedic in origin, and that all validly significant language must point to a thing to be done. He also does not try to deny the notion that *Brahman* must be "an accomplished entity",⁶⁸ though in that scripture can validly describe such '*siddhas*', information about the fact of *Brahman* can be regarded as a proper part of the scriptural revelation. Along with such information there are various injunctions to meditate on this *Brahman* ("as having an unlimited result")⁶⁹ and "to undertake an enquiry into *Brahman* so as to fully ascertain its nature."⁷⁰ But even should scripture only be able to give information about things to be done, "an enquiry into *Brahman* must (still) be undertaken", for this is precisely the action that is enjoined as being the means of attaining "the highest"⁷¹ "*Brahman* itself and its attributes are thus established thereby only that they subserve a certain action, viz., meditation."⁷²

(9) By analysis of the idea of a "thing to be done" (*kārya*) Rāmānuja further undermines the theory that to be meaningful words must depend on some such belief as

performing the duty for its own sake, or doing the enjoined action merely because it is said the action must be done.⁷³ For even Prabhākara admits that there is a distinction between this '*kārya*' and the particular action (*kṛti*) by which the 'thing to be done' is done. The *kārya* will thus be 'aimed at' by means of the action, and to this extent will be a '*karma*' or 'object of action'. But the object or aim of any action will be that which is 'most desired' and expected to be obtained by the action. Therefore, in that all people desire either to obtain pleasure or avoid pain (here following Kumārila), the performance of a '*kārya*' will in some sense be synonymous with engaging in action to obtain what is thought to be pleasurable or to avoid what is thought to be painful. In any case, no proper definition of this '*kārya*' is able to be given.

(10) In reply⁷⁴ Prabhākara suggests that the relation of '*kārya*' to '*kṛti*' may be thought of as like the relation of '*śeṣin*' or 'principle' to '*śeṣa*' or 'subordinate'. In other words, the action is "invariably accompanied by an activity proceeding with a view to something else."⁷⁵ But, says Rāmānuja, on this definition the action is in fact not the kind of 'subordinate' which *śeṣa* is to *śeṣin*, invariable connection though there may be. The principal weakness of the analogy is that the relation of *śeṣa* to *śeṣin* is not irreversible or one-way in the manner suggested of *kṛti* and *kārya* by Prabhākara. It is not only the 'subordinate' which acts 'with a view to' the 'principal', for in the case of servant and master (for example) we see the reverse is true, the master keeping the servant 'with a view to' something. And if it is said that he aims only for his own advantage and thus still confirms that everything done is in fact 'with a view to' the ultimate *kārya* (or *śeṣin* in this analogy), then it can easily be replied that the servant also serves in the end only for his personal advantage.

(11) It is worth noting at this point that this servant-master analogy is put to somewhat different use in *Vedārtha-saṃgraha*.⁷⁶ There Rāmānuja admits the analogy as illustrative of the *śeṣa-śeṣin* relationship, for "It is the essence of born slaves that they have their use in so far as they support the transcending importance of particular persons."⁷⁷ But he immediately goes on to say

that the slave-master relationship is in turn only illustrative of the universe-lord relationship for "in the same manner, all entities...have essentially only their use in as much as they support the transcendence of the Lord. Thus everyone and everything is accessory to the Lord and the Lord is principal of all." Therefore, claims Rāmānuja, it is impossible to think of the *śeṣin* (principal) as being the 'thing to be done' (*kārya* or *niyoga*) and the *śeṣa* (subordinate) as the action⁷⁸ by which this transcendent end is realised. This objection will help us later to assess just what is the basis of Rāmānuja's opposition to Mimāṃsa.

(12) But to continue the debate in *Śrī-Bhāṣya*: The *niyoga* can also not be defined as the 'final end' (*prayojana*) of the action.⁷⁹ For this can only mean "the end for which the agent (*niyogaya*) undertakes the action, and this end is no other than the desired object. As thus 'what is aimed at by action' cannot be defined otherwise than what is desired; *kārya* cannot be defined as what is to be effected by action."

(13) Mimāṃsa also attempts to bring out the transcendent character of that in the ritual action which lies beyond the mere action itself, by the use of the term '*apūrva*'. Thibaut⁸⁰ defines this as "the super-sensuous result of an action which later on produces the sensible result." (This is clearly very close to the idea of '*karma*' or even '*adṛṣṭa*!') It is this 'unprecedented' element brought about by the performance of the enjoined ritual action which is said to be its final purpose. It is different from such direct objects of desire as pleasure and avoidance of pain, and thus is thought to establish "the independent character of the effect of the action"⁸¹ itself. We shall here only mention the first and the last of the various objections Rāmānuja raises against this effort to bring out the transcendent nature of what Mimāṃsa regards as the 'end' of existence.

(a) He first says that the Mimāṃsa theory implies that *apūrva* is a means of bringing about the "direct objects"—pleasure and absence of pain. For according to the injunction "*svarga-kāmaḥ yajeta*" (He who desires heaven should sacrifice) it is clear that even when the ritual action itself has ceased, something goes on working (which Mimāṃsa likes to call '*apūrva*') and eventually

becomes effective in the production of a heavenly world, a place to be enjoyed by the agent of the action. So the *apūrva* "can therefore be understood only with regard to its capability of bringing about the heavenly world." This means that it is impossible to claim that there is any "independent object of action"⁸² intended here, or that there is any "independent result of action other than either pleasure or cessation of pain, or the means to bring about these two results."⁸³

(b) Rāmānuja has a final objection⁸⁴ to this Mimāṃsa attempt to establish some continuing transcendent element in the Vedic ritual action. He argues that the meaning of all these enjoined actions is that they possess "the quality of pleasing the higher person, who is the inner ruler of Agni and other divinities...and that through the highest person thus pleased the result of the sacrifice is accomplished."⁸⁵ It is significant that in *Vedārtha-saṃgraha* it is following an extensive passage exalting the transcendent qualities of creativity and immanent sovereignty in the supreme person⁸⁶ that the anti-Prabhākara polemic is introduced. Then Rāmānuja resumes⁸⁷ the same theme as soon as possible after repudiating the Mimāṃsa argument for the transcendent character of the *apūrva* element as the link between the ritual action and its supernatural results. After a quotation from *Dramiḍa*,⁸⁸ with various citations from *smṛti*⁸⁹ and *Gītā*⁹⁰ Rāmānuja concludes: "all acts are propitiations of the Sovereign Lord and...the Supreme Person, when duly propitiated with all these acts, grants their diverse results that are desired."⁹¹ Thus it is as Inner Ruler, with both gods and worshipping souls as his body, that the Lord directs the ritual activity. "So what is the point of assuming or imagining that an *apūrva* is denoted?"⁹² It is following further brief consideration of this same Mimāṃsa theme that another *Dramiḍa* passage is cited,⁹³ culminating in one of the most intensely theistic descriptions of God to be found in any of the three great works of Rāmānuja.

(14) All this points rather decisively to Rāmānuja's principal concern with regard to Mimāṃsa. Any notion of a sacred power inherent in the word and action of the ritual

Rāmanuja sees as inadequate to express the properly transcendent nature of scriptural revelation, or to give a basis for the benefits resulting from the performance of religious duty. Nor can this performance itself be a sufficient 'end'? *Brahman* alone, as the transcendent *Puruṣottama* supremely and personally responsive to the actions of his devotees, is such an adequate basis. He alone is sufficient end for the performance of action. The fact that, as with *Mīmāṃsa*, it is ritual tradition which forms the religious milieu in which Rāmanuja was working out his Vedānta is the reason for the intensity of the theistic teaching in this debate. He describes in vivid detail the deity who is the essential subject matter of scripture and object of his devotees' *upāsana*. It is, however, to the *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva* that he turns to indicate that all *upāsana* is inseparably connected with and is effectively rewarded by the Supreme Person. He is the soul, in intimate inter-action with his universal Body. Sacrifices, devotees and deities alike are included within the greatness of his one being. *Mīmāṃsa* ignores both the transcendent and immanent power of god. For Rāmanuja these are both expressed in the *ātma-śarīra-bhāva*.

CHAPTER VI

RAMANUJA AND SANKARA

The difficulties found in singling out a dominant source of origin for Rāmanuja's system is reflected in the ambivalence of his relationship with many of the schools of thought contemporary with him. We find that to some extent he is indebted even to those schools with which he engages in the most fierce polemical debate. A notable example is Sankara, whose *Kevala-advaita* features as the most prominent *purva-pakṣa* against whom Rāmanuja argues.¹ To suggest that Viśiṣṭa-advaita was largely dominated by Sankara's style of Advaita overstates the case.² The similarities found in these two systems remain largely formal, and even for these, various reasons can be adduced.

(1) Sankara describes Vedāntic thought as dealing with reality at two levels, *pāramārthika* or the ultimate, and *vyāvaharika* or the practical.³ Some scholars⁴ add a third level, *pratibhāśika* or phenomenal (*Vyāvaharika* being described as the empirical level). In those passages, therefore, where Sankara assumes, for the sake of practical necessity, the reality of differentiated existence, there is clearly no reason for Rāmanuja to reject his interpretation.⁵

(2) Many of the arguments Sankara uses against the various non-Vedāntic schools remain quite valid for Rāmanuja to use in Viśiṣṭa-advaita also, without in any way compromising his theistic position. But in relation to both these two points the way in which Rāmanuja is diametrically opposed to a number of the major theses of Sankara should not be forgotten.

(3) There is little doubt, however, that Sankara's style of Vedāntic expression, and in particular the form of his *Sūtra* commentary, greatly influenced all the subsequent Vedāntins. In the case of Madhva and his followers this is less obvious. Although Sankara himself was to some extent indebted to teachers like Gauḍapāda,⁶ it was his style of philosophy which undoubtedly marked the beginning of a new phase

in Vedāntic articulation. This fact further accounts for Rāmānuja's formal dependence upon Sankara.

(4) The name 'Viśiṣṭa-advaita' has generally been translated 'modified (or qualified) non-dualism', thus giving the impression that non-dualism is the determining principle, though expressed with certain 'modifications'. No doubt non-dualism, in the sense of a unified continuum of reality remains a cardinal principle for Rāmānuja, though this is very different from the non-dualism formulated by Sankara. But as Van Buitenen⁷ very pertinently argues, the compound here is not a *karma-dhāraya* but a *tat-puruṣa*, thus intending a determinatively possessive relationship of *viśiṣṭa* and *advaita* i.e., *viśiṣṭasya-advaita*. Van Buitenen suggests the translation "Monism (or unity) of the differenced", and follows this with a useful paraphrase: "Unity of the universe's spiritual and non-spiritual substances with and in a God whom they modify as his body".

For Sankara, it is the *advaita* concept alone which is determinative, and can only be elaborated by use of the metaphysical device peculiar to him, his *māyā-vāda*. It was precisely this all-explanatory basis to his system which Rāmānuja found so objectionable. The historical context may to some extent account for Rāmānuja's alarm concerning this doctrine. Rāmānuja understands from scripture that *māyā* "denotes that which produces various wonderful effects...and the highest person is...called 'māyin' because he possesses that power of *māyā* (i.e., to produce manifold wonderful creations) not on account of ignorance or nescience on his part."⁸ Linked with creative *māyā* is the notion of *avidyā*, the principle of obscuration at work within the individual.⁹ For Sankara *avidyā* is essentially non-definable,¹⁰ possessing the nature neither of being (*sat*) or non-being (*a-sat*). What is of particular significance is that Sankara was introducing this doctrine at a time when the influence of Mahāyāna Buddhism had begun to decrease, and popular forms of devotional theism, mainly Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva, had become the accepted pattern of Hinduism. Reacting against the ascetic tendency of Buddhism and the devotional outlook of theism, the Mimāṃsakas gave exaggerated

philosophic importance to the Vedic rites, denouncing the value of *Jñāna* and *Sannyāsa*.¹¹

Sankara returned to these same concepts as the central strands to his system in its metaphysical and practical aspects, with *māyā-vāda* as its undergirding explanation. By stealing Buddhism's *ammunition*, Sankara delivered the death-blow to its existence in India. Seeing this particular form of Advaita make such a rapid advance in winning the mind of a substantial portion of philosophic Hindu society, Rāmānuja must have thought that the Buddhist revolution was taking place all over again. Whether it is a just evaluation of Sankara's teaching or not, the reference to him as a "Crypto-Buddhist"¹² reflects the concern of the realistic theists.

A number of recent Advaita scholars¹³ have argued that Sankara, in his *māyā-vāda* did not actually teach that phenomenal existence is unreal. He consistently "claims some kind of reality even for objects of illusion. To be perceived is for him *to be*." One suspects, however, that this is only a tautology. For a perceivable thing, according to Sankara, cannot be *sat* in its *pāramārthika* sense. "To be perceived" may refer to "some kind of reality," but only in its "to be perceived" sense. Thus, while it may be true that Sankara tried to avoid the *śūnya* doctrine of the Mādhyamika Buddhists,¹⁴ there seems little doubt that the implications of the *māyā* doctrine at least lead us in the direction of the *śūnya*-view. For the place of the Creator, or the creative process, in any system would seem to be the crucial point in giving a substantial basis for the reality of the empirical. And as even Hiriyanna has to admit¹⁵, according to Sankara "the theistic conception cannot be regarded as ultimate." Then again,¹⁶ the notion of *saguṇa-Brahman* "involves *adhyāsa*, or "superimposition" and like that of *Īśvara* cannot be regarded as ultimate...the *saguṇa-Brahman* includes not merely reality but also appearance, which is something less than real."

There are numerous ways in which a comparative study, of Rāmānuja and Sankara could be made. In this chapter we shall attempt mainly to trace the development of Rāmānuja's argument in the first *adhikaraṇa*¹⁷ of *Śrī-Bhāṣya*. This procedure

has the obvious disadvantage of appearing less systematic than if important areas of difference were selected and illustrated with various passages from the whole body of Rāmanuja's writings. But this could result in a more subjective interpretation than if we allow him to work out his own anti-Sankara argument. To follow through the *mahā-siddhānta* of the *jijñāsa-adhikaraṇa* has the compensating advantage of showing the exact manner in which Rāmanuja's initial argument develops as he responds to his principal 'pūrvapakṣa'. And during the course of tracing this argument it will be possible to point out the more significantly distinctive features of his system in general.

(1) The first notable feature of the *adhikaraṇa* is that the epistemological argument with which Rāmanuja begins his refutation of *Kevala-advaita* is not only entirely compatible with, but actually appears to form the basis of the ontology (and cosmology) that is later introduced. In could be, of course, that his arguments concerning the nature of consciousness, knowledge and the knowing self, in fact, arise out of a more basic ontological premiss concerning the nature of *Brahman* and that 'being' (*sat*) which is the subject of all Vedāntic *sad-vidyā*. This is argued by K. C. Varadachari¹⁸. "Metaphysical reality is of the nature of soul-body.....from this we have to extract the view about the knowledge-relation." Or in the words of P. N. Srinivasachari¹⁹. "Epistemology is based on ontology and the central concept used by Rāmanuja to explain it is *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva*."

This appears to be contradicted by some of the pro-Sankara Indian scholars. Thus A. Bhattacharya: "The unique feature of Rāmanuja's system is his identification of the theory of knowledge with the theory of Being. Epistemology has greater importance in Rāmanuja than in Sankara; for through it we can understand not only the inward nature of our self-conscious being but also the inward nature of the divine being."²⁰ This modifies the statement of M. Sircar that "both Sankara's and Rāmanuja's ontological conceptions are based upon the psychological nature of knowledge."²¹ In fact there seems to

be an inter-play of ideas concerning the nature of reality (ontology) and the structure of the individual and his cognising of this reality (epistemology). Sankara, for example, bases most of his *Brahma-jijñāsa* discussion on his analysis of the nature of the *ātman*. Because of our certainty regarding the *ātman* we can assume the existence of *Brahman*, we do not depend on argument for this knowledge. "Everyone is conscious of his self, and never thinks, 'I am not' And immediately Sankara plunges into his principal thesis, "This self is *Brahman*", therefore, "The existence of *Brahman* is known on the ground of its being the self of everyone."²² The individual's sense of self-existence is analogically applied to *Brahman*'s infinite existence. But the analogy is immediately swallowed up in the assumption of *Brahma-ātman* identity, and *ātman* is endued with the infinity of *Brahman*.

In any case the place of epistemology in Sankara's system is peculiarly elusive, for although it is entirely compatible with his ontology, its transcendental character, in which the subject alone is allowed reality,²³ indicates his ambiguous attitude to the process of cognition and knowing. It is not insignificant that in his *Sūtra Bhāṣya*, he plunges directly²⁴ into this theme that the objective world which presents itself in fact is unreal, being confused with the subject or self's reality by means of *adhyāsa*, which in turn is the result of all-deluding *avidyā*. Yet the *jijñāsa-sūtra*, which clearly affords good opportunity to develop fully his epistemological principles, received but scant treatment in comparison to Rāmanuja's extensive comment. There is but a meagre note on this primary theme of *Brahman* as a legitimately desired object of knowledge. In the case of Rāmanuja also we find an interdependence of epistemology and ontology, or of psychology and theology. As we noted earlier, Rāmanuja's analysis of the body-soul relationship helps him to determine the God-world relationship. But it can equally be claimed that it was a more primary concept of God's transcendence and immanence which in turn determined his use of the *ātma śarīra* analogy.

(2) Before he launches into his *mahā siddhānta* Rāmanuja offers a summary²⁵ of the *pūrvapakṣa* position: "Eternal,

absolutely non-changing consciousness, whose nature is non-differenced intelligence, free from all distinction whatever, owing to error illusorily manifests itself (*vivartatte*) as broken into manifold distinctions—knowing subjects, objects of knowledge, acts of knowledge. And the purpose for which we (*Advaitins*) enter on the consideration of the Vedānta texts is utterly to destroy what is the root of all error, i.e., Nescience, and thus to obtain a firm knowledge of the one-ness of *Brahman* whose nature is mere intelligence—free, pure, eternal.³⁶

We may note in passing that at the heart of this Advaitist attitude is the concern for the absolute independence of the self. It is precisely because the self must not be in any way dependent that whatever is exterior to it, viz., the phenomenal world, must be regarded as illusory, or at most not real as the transcendent self is real. And by the total identity of transcendent inner self with the unconditioned *nirguṇa-Brahman* it was believed that this inner self's independence is assured. Rāmānuja, of course, reverses²⁷ both the premiss and the conclusion of this argument and claims that it is in total dependence upon Brahman, who as Supreme Self is other than the inner self, that the self is assured of eternal freedom.

(3) The initial aim of the *mahā-siddhānta* is to disprove the Advaitin's argument that reality and the self are comprised of pure consciousness. Rāmānuja begins²⁸ by showing the absurdity of attempting to prove that any substance devoid of all difference can be the object of proof or of any cognisable knowledge. Nothing can be known unless it is distinguishable by particular characteristics.²⁹ Consciousness³⁰ has this same character in so far as it can become the object of knowledge. When we are conscious of any thing and say, 'I saw this', we are implicitly predicating qualities of that thing.

This predicative understanding of knowledge is then confirmed by reference to the three principal *pramāṇas* or means of valid knowledge, *śabda*,³¹ *pratyakṣa*³² and *anumāna*.³³

(a) The term '*śabda*' no doubt carried certain overtones of the more technical use we have discussed earlier. But Rāmānuja primarily intends to point out here that in

our everyday use of language the relational character of knowledge and the communication of knowledge is indicated by the way we relate particular words to particular objects. "The sentence therefore which is an aggregate of words expresses some special combination of things (meanings of words) and hence has no power to denote a thing devoid of difference."³⁴

(b) *Pratyakṣa* or empirical perception can be of two kinds—determinate(*savikalpa*) or non-determinate(*nirvikalpa*). Non-determinate perception is understood by Rāmānuja to mean the perception of the first individual in any species; determinate perception that of any individual subsequent to this, when what has been previously perceived of that species is used to identify the particular specimen, and also differentiate it from individuals of the species perceived before.

At this point³⁵ Rāmānuja introduces a concept which will later be seen to play an important role in his system as a whole. It concerns the relation of distinguishing attribute and thing distinguished,³⁶ which Rāmānuja contends is a relation that invariably excludes non-difference. The idea is actually brought in to repudiate a possible Bhedabheda objection that some things possess identity (in so far as they belong to the same genus) and difference (in so far as each individual in the genus possesses particular attributes) at one and the same time.

(c) The process by which inference (*anumāna*) is made also confirms the view that nothing can be established as known unless it is characterised by some degree of difference. For inference is made as a conclusion to what is perceived, which as stated above is itself only possible on the basis of distinguishing characteristics. Thus, to attempt to prove something that is non-differenced using a process of argument that is itself dependent upon distinctions is an intrinsic self-contradiction. It is like the "man who asserts that his own mother never had any children."³⁷ It may be observed at this point that like Sankara, Rāmānuja later rejects the Nyāya view that the being of *Brahman* can be proved by means of inferential reasoning. In any case, all the accepted processes by which knowledge is obtained illustrate the contention that the object

of knowledge is always distinguished by its characteristics. Knowledge thus is always 'relative', implying the relating of the 'generic characteristics' in one case to that of another, or even the relating of the sensory organs by which distinctions are established to the particular characteristics presented to self-consciousness as a whole.³⁸

To some extent Rāmānuja's 'relational system'³⁹ is, as Bhattacharya remarks, based on "the evidence of self-consciousness... Here is the divergence between Rāmānuja, and Śankara. Śankara, led by transcendental instinct (intuition?) cannot accept the evidence of self-consciousness as truth, for self-consciousness to him is relative consciousness."⁴⁰ To Rāmānuja, this relational character in no way vitiates the evidence of self-consciousness, for although it cannot in itself establish the being of *Brahman*, it nevertheless affords confirmation of the relational character of reality presented in scriptural revelation.⁴¹

(4) When the Advaitin claims that pure consciousness has the character of 'self-illumination' (*svayam-prakāśatva*) Rāmānuja replies⁴² that we need to enquire just what is 'illuminated' and to what. He agrees that at the time when the *ātman* 'illuminates', that is reveals other things so that they are constituted as objects, consciousness can then be said to be itself 'non-object', that is it stands as subject. But all consciousness cannot be said always to be self-illuminating and hence non-objective. For example, that which is the consciousness of one person can become the object of cognition to another, or the object of memory to himself. Rāmānuja offers two definitions of consciousness.

(a) It shines forth, or manifests itself through its own being to its own substrate at a particular moment.

(b) "It is instrumental in proving its own object by its own being."⁴³ The "substrate" of consciousness is the self which is conscious, "Proving its own object" can mean either showing itself as the object of the conscious self, or showing to the self those things which are presented as objects through the function of consciousness. This is to some

extent clarified by the paragraph which follows it, where Rāmānuja argues that even when consciousness becomes the object of another state of consciousness (or even another person's consciousness) the above two characteristics remain. So that "if we made the presence of consciousness dependent on the absence of its being an object of consciousness,"⁴⁴ we should arrive at the conclusion that consciousness is not consciousness." In other words, both the possible interpretations of 'proving its own object' suggested above, could be valid. Thus consciousness can become itself an object, and can function in relation to differentiated objects.

(5) (a) In the *Vedārtha Saṃgraha*⁴⁵ Rāmānuja analyses the essential character of the root *jñā*, 'to be conscious of'; it means "to have subject and object and a specific action with a specific nature which distinguishes it from other actions (and this character) even persists in the case of a self-evident, self-realised object: for were it free from all difference then there would be no realisation at all."⁴⁶ In *Śrī Bhāṣya* also here is a further discussion of *svayam prakāśatva* which we shall presently note. Meanwhile we find that following an analysis of consciousness as being not eternal and being capable of change, the argument reaches what can be regarded as an initial culminating point when Rāmānuja concludes that consciousness exists as the attribute of a permanent conscious self. "The essential character of consciousness or knowledge is that by its very existence it renders things capable of becoming objects, to its own substrate, of thought or speech. This consciousness (*anubhūti*) which is also termed *jñāna*, *avagati*, *samvid* is a particular attribute belonging to a conscious self and related to an object."⁴⁷

(b) Rāmānuja then brings out a further point in the discussion on consciousness as self-illuminating. Consciousness operates by virtue of its relation to the self, to which it is related as attribute to substance. Thus "to be self-luminous means to have consciousness for one's essential nature."⁴⁸ And that which has light for its essential nature does not depend for its light on something else." Using the analogy of light here,

Rāmaṇuja argues that the self can be regarded as essentially intelligent (*cit-rūpa*) and yet be seen to consist both of light as its substance, and also of illumining power which is "practically treated as a quality because it always has the substance *tejas* for its substrate, and depends on it."⁴⁹ Here Rāmaṇuja gives his first glimpse of the idea which will be developed later but which underlies the whole of his system, that in all the cases through which he has been illustrating his thesis of reality as comprised of a substance-attribute relationship, the relationship is one of inseparable dependence.⁵⁰

(c) Following numerous scriptural citations to confirm the relation of self and knowledge or consciousness his thesis is restated thus:⁵¹ "The self-luminous self is a knower,⁵² i.e., a knowing subject, and not pure light (non-personal intelligence)... The self thus cannot be mere consciousness."⁵³ And again;⁵⁴ "That knowledge is of the nature of light depends altogether on its connection with the knowing 'I'; it is due to the latter that knowledge, like pleasure, manifests itself to that conscious person who is its substrate, and not to anybody else. The self is thus not mere knowledge, but is the knowing 'I'."

(6) At this point Rāmaṇuja repudiates the idea that the "conscious subject,"⁵⁵ which is the "substrate" of consciousness, is an unreal illusion, caused only by deluding *aham-kāra*.⁵⁶ *Aham-kāra* is that underlying principle of egoity found initially in the Sāṃkhya description of the evolutionary process, and is intended to explain how pure, passive *puruṣa* becomes self-conscious, active, empirical ego. It seems to result from and act parallel to *prakṛti*, and thus is part of evolutionary change which is in reality unrelated to the unchanging self. When the Advaitin makes use of this idea to argue his case for the self as pure, unchanging consciousness, Rāmaṇuja counters this by saying that were this the case then these two, the conscious subject or self and consciousness would always appear coterminously. In fact consciousness invariably presents itself as something separate from the self, "constituting a distinguishing attribute of the I,"⁵⁷ just as a stick is an attribute of Devadatta who carries it. The judgement 'I am conscious' reveals an 'I' distinguished by consciousness: and to declare that it refers only to a state of

consciousness which is a mere attribute is no better than to say that the judgement 'Devadatta carries a stick', is about the stick only."⁵⁸ He goes on to reject the notion that the true self is only seen as conscious subject when the body is mistakenly identified with the self, as is revealed in statements such as 'I am stout'. For, says Rāmaṇuja, in this case the consciousness that according to the Advaitin is wrongly imagined as the self would also be false, "for it presents itself to the mind of the same person."⁵⁹

Concerning the relation of the body to the self with which it is associated and to *ahamkāra* Rāmaṇuja goes on to say, "Just as the body, through its objectiveness, outwardness, and similar causes, is distinguished from what possesses the opposite attributes of subjectiveness, inwardness and so on, for the same reason the *aham-kāra* also which is of the same substantial nature as the body (both being effects of *prakṛti*) is similarly distinguished."⁶⁰ That this *aham-kāra* principle of non-intelligent nature can in no way cause the 'manifestation' of consciousness or the conscious self is then argued at some length,⁶¹ in the course of which Rāmaṇuja's realistic outlook appears: "The essential nature of manifesting agents rather lies therein that they promote the knowledge of things as they really are, and this is also the nature of whatever promotes knowledge and the means thereof."⁶²

(7) The theme is then developed⁶³ that the conscious self persists even in the state of deep sleep, (a state in which the Advaitin⁶⁴ sees the re-emergence of that state of pure consciousness proper to the *ātman*) and also in the state of release from *avidyā* and the accompanying bondage to *samsāra*. Rāmaṇuja maintains that if the consciousness of the 'I' terminates in the *mokṣa*-state then "it in fact amounts to the doctrine... that final release is the annihilation of the self. The 'I' is not a mere attribute to the self (in the sense that consciousness as such is an attribute of the self) so that even after its destruction the essential nature of the self might persist as it persists on the cessation of ignorance; but it constitutes the very nature of the self."⁶⁵ Here again we catch a glimpse of Rāmaṇuja's concern that the Advaitin's argument for the self as pure consciousness

devoid of any relationship of dependence, instead of establishing the proper independence of the *ātman* from all finite limitations, eventually dooms the *ātman* itself to "annihilation". To Rāmānuja, there is nothing left that is identifiable as *ātman*.

(8) The debate now⁶⁶ begins to move over into ontological and theological terms and hence to the nature of *Brahman* as taught by scripture. It is remarkable how smoothly this transition can be made from the arguments concerned with epistemology. We have already noted that in both Rāmānuja and Sankara there is an inter-play between epistemology and ontology. Sankara's idea of *ātman* as pure consciousness is entirely of a piece with his primary thesis that this pure-self can be in no way distinguished from *Brahman*. There is however the all-important explanation which is needed to account for this transcendent identity, viz., the negative doctrine of *avidyā*. For Rāmānuja, the process of moving from his initial interpretation of consciousness and its attributive relationship with the conscious self, to *Brahman*, who is not a "substance devoid of all difference" but is "distinguished by attributes", does not require the undergirding of any further concept. The self-body concept which he develops more fully in his ontology and cosmology cannot be said to be brought into the argument from outside. It is entirely in harmony with the notion used fairly extensively in his epistemological argument that all entities are comprised of substance and attributes related in a normally inseparable manner.

(9) It is not unnatural to find that as the argument now concerns the being of *Brahman* there is far more frequent reference to scriptural authority. Before introducing us to this aspect of his teaching however, Rāmānuja returns to the Advaitin's theme that perception is unreliable, contending that if this is so then there can be no basis for the claim that scriptural statements are authoritative either. For the Advaitin claims that while perception, which of necessity involves plurality, is "based on some defect" scripture has the power of 'sublating' perception. That is, not itself being subject to this 'defect' it is able to refute the evidence of perception. But, counters Rāmānuja, if it is said that it is by means of the evidence presented in scripture that the 'defect'

of perception is known and so 'sublated', "We point out that you are arguing in a circle: you prove the defectiveness of the imagination of plurality through the fact that scripture tells to us about a substance devoid of all difference; and at the same time you prove the latter point through the former." The argument continues at some length with considerable force, the closeness of the logic making summarisation very difficult. His central thesis is this: if all the empirical processes by which knowledge is acquired are discredited, "by what means do you arrive at the conclusion that scripture cannot possibly be assumed to be defective in any way, while defects may be ascribed to perception?"

(10) Even when Rāmānuja goes on to outline the basis of his *Sat-khyāti-vāda*⁶⁷ there seems little reason to dismiss the central notion of the argument, which is that even when unreal objects are perceived, as in dreams or the rope mistaken for a snake, the cognition itself is real, and hence is capable of producing real fear, etc. For even if, as Rāmānuja contends must be concluded by the *a-sat-khyāti-vādin*, *ātma-khyāti-vādin* and *a-khyāti-vādin*, it is said that "the actual process is that of one thing appearing as another", it is still "not reasonable to assume something altogether non-perceived and groundless." Even the perception of a shell as silver is based on the actual existence of an element of silver in the shell, the identity being, so to speak, overstated by reason of some "defect of the eye". But the cognition of silver in the shell is not entirely invalid. For when the white shell is mistakenly seen as a yellow shell, it is by reason of the literally jaundiced vision of the person looking.⁶⁸

(11) Rāmānuja is so concerned to defend even the reality of objects presented to persons dreaming, that in their case he attributes these objects to the direct creative activity of *Brahman* who by using his "creative energy"⁶⁹ brings into existence those objects which are perceived only by the person dreaming, in accordance with the merit or demerit associated with his *jīva*. This argument takes to the limit Rāmānuja's view that "all cognition is true" precisely because the objects of cognition are the creation of the real and knowable *Brahman*.

So it is with this thought that the section closes:⁷⁰ the "holy, highest *Brahman*—while producing the entire world as an object of fruition for the individual souls;⁷¹ in agreement with their respective good and ill deserts creates certain things of such a nature as to become common objects of consciousness,⁷² either pleasant or unpleasant, to all souls together, while certain other things are created in such a way as to be perceived only by particular persons, and to persist for a limited time only." The thought here expressed that creation is for the sake of the 'fruition' of souls will be discussed in the final chapter. The idea is, as we shall see, relevant not only to the question of causal-purpose and the *lilā*-notion, but also to Rāmānuja's soteriology.

(12) When we return to the point at which Rāmānuja makes the transition from epistemology to ontology, we find that the primary characteristic claimed by him for the being of *Brahman* is just this power of causal determination. "The highest *Brahman* which is denoted by the term 'Being'⁷³ is the substantial and also the operative cause of the world."⁷⁴ In this way, just as consciousness (in Sankara of an indeterminate nature) is said by Rāmānuja to be of a determinate, distinguishing character, so *Brahman* (in Sankara identical with pure consciousness) possesses as his primary characteristic this determining, causal ability. Later we shall see that when Rāmānuja uses the body-soul analogy to indicate the relation of *Brahman* to the universe, it is with precisely this idea of the self's capacity to determine the functioning of the body that *Brahman* is said to be self to the universe.

In emphasising that *Brahman* is both material and efficient cause of both *prakṛti* and the souls, Rāmānuja appears to have a dual intention in mind, in addition to the idea of attributing real, cognisable existence to the universe. For on the one hand to say that *Brahman* is substantially and volitionally the cause of the universe points out sharply the transcendent supremacy of *Brahman*. And on the other hand when it is said in particular that the soul exists as the effect of *Brahman* its material and efficient cause, the absolutely dependent nature of the soul is emphasised equally sharply. In so far as *Brahman* is material cause this dependency is one comprised

of a *substantial* relationship. When the relationship is further elucidated as that of substance to attribute and soul to body, the dependency is seen as one of *inseparable* belonging.

(13) It that the soul and *prakṛti* are said to be beginningless, it must be asked whether this posits something of a limitation in connection with the claim that *Brahman* is also efficient cause. We shall need to discuss this also in the final chapter. Superficially it does appear to limit the efficient causality of *Brahman* to that of *formative* activity, that is changing the state of the universe from *sūkṣma-avastha* to *sthūla-avastha*. But in that Rāmānuja does not agree that there was any preceding matter outside the being of *Brahman*, then this 'formative' creative act, though not *ex-nihilo*, cannot be said to be less than absolute, i.e., *ex-Brahman*. This could not be said of Sankara's system, in which *māyā*, acting in conjunction with *Īśvara*, comprises the material cause of the universe.⁷⁵

(14) We are introduced to the concept of *sāmāna-adhikarāṇya*⁷⁶ when Rāmānuja begins to cite scriptural evidence for the claim that *Brahman* is not an undifferentiated, unqualified substance. He begins⁷⁷ with those texts used by the Advaitin to prove just this theory. "The text 'True, knowledge, infinite is *Brahman*'⁷⁸ does not prove a substance devoid of all difference,⁷⁹ for the reason that the co-ordination of the terms of which it consists explains itself in so far only as denoting one thing distinguished by several attributes.⁸⁰ For 'co-ordination' means the reference (of several terms) to one thing, there being a different reason for the application (of these several terms to one thing). Now whether we take the several terms, 'True,' 'Knowledge', 'Infinite', in their primary sense, i.e., as denoting qualities, or as denoting modes of being opposed to whatever is contrary to these qualities;⁸¹ in either case we must needs admit a plurality of causes for the application of those several terms to one thing...What co-ordination aims at just to convey the idea of one thing being qualified by several attributes." Then, following the quotation of a number of supporting texts the following conclusion is reached: "These and other texts declare that to *Brahman*, whose essential nature is knowledge, there belong many excellent qualities among which that of being

a knowing subject stands first, and that *Brahman* is free from all evil qualities." This whole section⁸² is in fact comprised largely of the citation of *śruti*, *smṛti* and *purāṇa*, but in the course of these extensive references two new ideas are introduced which are of immense importance in the development of the *Viśiṣṭa-advaita* system.

(15) The first reference is to the need for the *bhakti* relationship with *Brahman*. In the earlier 'small *siddhānta*' Rāmānuja had stressed the need for meditation on *Brahman*, for which the fulfilment of the Vedic injunctions was seen as a necessary preparation. It was there said that *upāsana* means "a steady remembrance" of *Brahman*, in which there is "immediate presentation" (*sākṣātkāra*) this being considered synonymous with *bhakti*. Now in this present passage there is an exegesis of a text from *Taittiriya Upaniṣad*; ⁸³ "he obtains all desire together with *Brahman* the all-wise." This is interpreted to mean that when *Brahman* is meditated upon, the qualities of *Brahman*, which are the objects of the devotee's desires, are also "obtained", i.e., they can become "the chief matter of meditation, just as these qualities are the principal point in *Brahman* reached by the devotee." ⁸⁴

At the end of this section,⁸⁵ following the claim that "scripture...in several places refers to the highest and the individual soul as standing over against each other", Rāmānuja goes on to say that "the released soul attains only the same attributes as the highest self." Citing the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*⁸⁶ he says, "That *Brahman* leads him who meditates on it, and who is capable of change, towards its own being (*ātma-bhāva*) in the same way as the magnet attracts the iron." But the "attracted body does not become essentially one with the body attracting." What is emphasised here is that it is the *bhakti*-relationship which alone is capable of leading the soul to its full potential as possessing the same 'character' (*prakarata*) as *Brahman*, and to be freed from that *avidyā* (properly understood) which hides its proper status. There seems little doubt that the motivation underlying the whole development of Rāmānuja's argument against the Advaitin, in which he attempts in a variety of ways to establish on the one hand the perfect distinguishing

attributes of *Brahman* and on the other hand the real, differentiated existence of the self, is this *bhakti* relationship.⁸⁷ For the ultimate reality and validity of *bhakti* is lost in the Advaitin's scheme.⁸⁸

(16) It is following this section that Rāmānuja offers his extensive refutation of *avidyā*. We have seen above that he does not rule out the existence of *avidyā* altogether, for certainly some theory appears to be needed to explain why in fact the vast majority of souls are unable to see what is their proper relationship with the supreme self. But for Rāmānuja this lack of knowledge of the soul's essential nature, which he virtually equates with *karman*,⁸⁹ has no existence independent of *Brahman* even though *Brahman* is not its *direct* cause. And although *Karman-avidyā* is the reason for souls being associated with a variety of bodies (gods, men, animals, etc.) it is not the deluding *creator* that *māyā-avidyā* becomes in Advaita. The manifold forms of existence are quite real, but should not be allowed to obscure from the *ātman* its proper relation of dependency upon *Brahman*, whatever the particular form of body it may be associated with. And we find as Rāmānuja develops this *sapta anupapatti*⁹⁰ in his repudiation of Sankara-style *avidyā*, that the main thrust of the argument concerns the inconsistency of positing this all-enveloping, all-creating principle in distinction from the Supreme *Brahman* who is characterised by every kind of perfection. In other words, not only does the doctrine stand in opposition to Rāmānuja's understanding of the reality of the universe and of the conscious self in particular, it also posits a threat to the integrity and supremacy of *Brahman*.

(17) The second new idea which Rāmānuja introduces in this section is that which subsequently proves to be the point of reference for virtually all the major tenets of his system. This is the analogical doctrine of the universe as the body of *Brahman*, to which *Brahman* is the self. The first use of the analogy occurs in a passage⁹¹ in which the reality of the universe is being stressed. "The entire complex of intelligent and non-intelligent beings (souls and matter) in all their different estates is real,⁹² and constitutes the form, i.e.,

the body of the highest Brahman, as appears from these passages which co-ordinate it with *Brahman* by means of terms such as *śarira*, *rūpa*, *tanu*, *aṁṣa*, *śakti*, *vibhūti*, and so on :- (the texts teach) that the souls which are a manifestation of *Brahman*'s power exist in their own essential nature, and also, through their connection with matter, in the form of embodied souls (*ksetra-jñā*)...The outcome of all this is that we have to cognise *Brahman* as carrying plurality within itself, and the world, which is the manifestation of his power, as something real (*parama-ārtha*)."

This theme of the real existence of the universe, which we may note is not only grounded on the analogical relationship, but also on the creative 'manifestation' of the power of *Brahman* who is free from all imperfection, is continued in rejection of the doctrine of *avidyā*, until Rāmanuja comes to the answer given in the *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* to Maitreya's question on the origin and consistency of the world. The answer, "The world is He",⁹³ is said by Rāmanuja to indicate the kind of identify that "is founded thereon that *Brahman* pervades the world as its self in the character of its inward ruler; and is not founded on unity of substance of the pervading principle and the world pervaded."⁹⁴

Rāmanuja goes on to say that "the co-ordination of the words 'the world' and 'He' thus rests on the relation between the two, owing to which the world is the body of *Brahman*, and *Brahman* the self of the world."⁹⁵ This takes a little further the use made in a previous passage of the *sāmāna-adhikaraṇya* grammatical construction.

(18) It is to illustrate and clarify the nature of the so-called 'identity statements' that Rāmanuja compares these statements to the relation found between self and the body with which the self is associated. As we have already seen, *avidyā* is said to be at work when a person does not recognise the proper nature of his or another's *ātman*, but identifies it with the body, found, as a result of the working of *karman*, associated with it. This is not to say that the body is in any way unreal, but rather that it is not the *ātman*, and must be distinguished

from the *ātman*. For the purposes of speech, however, it is necessary to refer to the whole self-body existence as the person, as though the two entities in relationship were a single identity. In the same way many constructions of speech appear to refer to a non-differenced entity, but on examination are found to express a relational identity, in which there is one underlying 'substance' but comprised of predicative distinctions. These are indicated by the use of a variety of predications attributed to that one substrate. If some form of distinction were not intended then the plethora of predications made of the being of *Brahman* would be sheer nonsense.

It is, however, in the later section in which the *mahā-vākya*, "tat-tvam-asi", is examined that this *sāmāna-adhikaraṇya* concept is treated in greater detail. Meanwhile we can note that Rāmanuja again returns briefly in this section also to the *bhakti*-relationship. In this instance it is posited as the only means by which men are able to see that the relationship of *Brahman* to the universe is that of self to body, and that the individual souls are differentiated within that body.

(19) The "tat-tvam-asi" section⁹⁶ mentioned above summarises and in some cases elaborates a number of the previous arguments. We can, however, note certain points that appear for the first time, or at least are treated in an original way. In all, some twenty points are made, beginning with the notion that because "tat-tvam-asi" is a *sāmāna-adhikaraṇya* construction, the relation of the two terms is such as "to express one thing subsisting in a two fold form. If such doubleness of form were abandoned, there could be no difference of aspects giving rise to the application of the different terms,⁹⁷ and the entire principle of co-ordination would thus be given up." If this were so then the Advaitin's view that the only distinction involved is that of *lakṣaṇā*⁹⁸ (translated by Thibaut 'implication') would have to be accepted.

Rāmanuja further contends⁹⁹ that an absolute identity of 'tat' and 'tvam' would result in the perfect *Brahman* becoming the 'substrate' of *avidyā* which belongs to the unenlightened soul, i.e., 'tvam', and of "all those defects and afflictions which

spring from Nescience." (This anomaly is of course one of the principal points of the seven-fold argument against the *avidyā*-notion). And if "*tat-tvam-asi*" is intended to 'sublate'¹⁰⁰ or rectify the mistaken idea held previously by the soul that plurality exists in the universe, then again we would have "to admit that the two terms 'that' and 'thou' have an implied meaning, there being in reality no two such differentiated beings to refer to. Rāmānuja goes on¹⁰¹ to show that the process of 'sublation' claimed in this instance bears no resemblance to other valid cases of the 'sublation' of error,

He then¹⁰² refers "*tat*" and "*tvam*" to the soul-body analogy. For if this text "is understood to refer to *Brahman* as having the individual soul for its body, both words keep their primary denotation; and, the text thus making a declaration about one substance distinguished by two aspects, ¹⁰³ the fundamental principle of 'co-ordination' is preserved. "Moreover, Rāmānuja sees this explanation as implying that "*Brahman*-free from all imperfection and comprising within itself all auspicious qualities—is the internal ruler of the individual souls¹⁰⁴ (i.e., as their self) and possesses lordly power." (i.e., he is the distinguishable Transcendent). In this way the text is also:

- (a) put into its context;
- (b) can be reconciled with such texts¹⁰⁵ as speak e.g., of "the great Lord, the highest of Lords";
- (c) is seen to correspond exactly with those many passages which "teach that the world has its self in *Brahman*, in so far as the whole aggregate of intelligent and non-intelligent beings constitutes *Brahman's* body";¹⁰⁶ and,
- (d) affords a principle by which all things can be said "to possess their substantiality and their connexion with the words denoting them."¹⁰⁷ For, as "the whole world different from *Brahman* derives its substantial being only from constituting *Brahman's* body, any term denoting the world or something in it conveys a meaning which has its proper consummation in *Brahman* only."¹⁰⁸

(20) Here again we see the striking contrast between Sankara's view of the nature of *Brahman's* transcendence and that of Rāmānuja. For Rāmānuja, *Brahman* is beyond the empirical universe, but yet remains in such a relationship with it that even empirically descriptive language points significantly to *Brahman*, its culminating point.¹⁰⁹ Hence, analogical description of *Brahman* becomes possible, for *Brahman* contains the universe within his total being, transcending it by his inclusiveness. This may properly be termed *pan-en-theistic* Vedānta. On the other hand Kevalādvaita's transcendental identity (of *Brahman* and *ātman*) seems to preclude any significant relationship between *Brahman* and the universe. Thus it stands as the reversal of *pan-en-theism*, being a kind of *pan-ex-Brahmanism* (all is outside *Brahman*—he Transcends all) in which the pure reality of *Brahman* must stand untouched by any form of empirical existence.

CHAPTER VII

RAMANUJA AND BHEDABHEDA

It was mentioned in the introduction that a number of scholars¹ conclude that some form of Bhedābheda is the philosophy underlying the aphoristic chain of statements comprising the *Brahma-sūtras*. If this is the case, then it must be assumed there is very ancient tradition in Vedānta of some form, or forms, of Bhedābheda. Indeed, it could will be argued that all Vedānta, if it is to include all the diverse statements in the Upaniṣads about the nature of reality, must be constructed upon some basis in which both difference and non-difference can find a mutually acceptable place. For Sankara² this basis is found in the distinction of the real and the phenomenal.³ But the place of the phenomenal is constantly under question, and being ultimately illusory, difference is not only to be subordinate to, but totally superceded by non-difference. For Rāmānuja too, the existence of both is recognised, but in his system the paradox of difference and non-difference is analogically explained in the organic relation of body and soul.

Both Rāmānuja and Sankara, however, differ from the various schools of Bhedābheda in rejecting the implications of the *Brahma-pariṇāma-vāda*. Sankara, naturally, rejects the whole idea of realistic transformation, and expounds the notion of *vivarta-vāda*,⁴ introduced probably by Gauḍapada,⁵ who seems to form a bridge between Sāṃkhya and Sankara's *Kevala-advaita*. For Sankara, the sacrifice of all empirical realism or conceptualism was presumably felt to be the only way to preserve the perfection of the Real or *para-Brahman*. And for all his violent denunciation of *Kevala-advaita* Rāmānuja contends that "this Bhedābheda doctrine is worse."⁶ For this reason the difference between it and Rāmānuja will be considered in some detail.

The reason for Rāmānuja making this perhaps unexpectedly harsh criticism is just that Bhedābheda was seen to implicate the

perfect, unchanging *Brahman* in the universe of *doṣa* and change, with the consequence that *mokṣa* becomes impossible, "immeasurable misery is ultimately real...it can never be overcome."⁷ If the Bhedābheda-vādin replies that distinction should be made between the embodied *jīva* and the Lord himself, then Rāmānuja can retort that the Bhedābheda-vādin is well on the way to becoming a Viśiṣṭa-advaitin, but such a distinction cannot be made as long as identity of essence is maintained between *paramātmān* and *jivātmān*. Rāmānuja concludes that the body-soul relationship alone is sufficient to indicate the proper form of identity-in-difference. *Brahma-pariṇāma* must be understood, therefore in terms of *Brahma-śarīra-pariṇāma*.⁸

Bhartṛpapaṇca⁹ appears as the first Bhedābheda-vādin. Sankara enters into polemic debate with his teaching, just as later Bhāskara¹⁰ was to reject much of Sankara's. Bhartṛpapaṇca suggested that "on the spiritual side *Brahman* is transformed into the *antaryāmin* and the *jivā*; on the physical side into *avyakta*, *sūtra*, *virāj* and *devata*, which are all cosmic; and *jāti* and *pinḍi* which are not cosmic. These are the *avasthas* or modes of *Brahman*... They are again classified into three *rasis*, *paramātmā-rasi*, *jīva-rasi* and *mūrtamūrtā-rasi* which correspond to god, soul and matter."¹¹ On this cosmological basis Bhartṛpapaṇca maintained the reality of both difference and non-difference, and it is clear that the later Bhedābheda-vādins were to some extent indebted to him for their view of *Brahma-pariṇāma*.

In view of Rāmānuja's detailed repudiation of Bhedābheda in general and of Bhāskara and Yādavaprakāśa in particular, it is surprising to find Dasgupta contending¹² that "Rāmānuja was largely indebted for his philosophical opinions and views to Bhāskara, and on most topics their doctrines are more or less the same." It is true that there is a considerable area of agreement between the two Vedāntins, and that Rāmānuja probably made use of some Bhāskara's arguments, in particular in his opposition to Sankara's *māyāvāda*.¹³ Moreover Bhāskara seems to have felt the problem implicit in his concept of *Brahma-pariṇāma*, and apparently anticipating what was later to be Rāmānuja's principal criticism, contends that "in spite of this modification of

himself, (*Brahman*) remains unchanged in his own purity, for it is by the manifestation and modification of his powers (*bhoktṛ-śakti* and *bhogyā-śakti*) that the modification of the world as enjoyable and enjoyer takes place."¹³ This defence, however, fails to satisfy Rāmānuja who counters it by claiming that *Brahman's śakti* cannot be thus separated from the essential *Brahman*.¹⁵ It could presumably be said that Rāmānuja merely makes a formal substitute of *śarīra* for *śakti*, but the difference is in fact much more than mere change in terminology.

In addition to his apparent use of some of Bhāskara's anti-*māyā* polemic Rāmānuja also interprets a number of Sūtras in a way similar to the Bhedābheda-vadin and in contradistinction to Sankara. For example, *jīvan-mukti* is opposed; the soul is regarded as atomic in character; its animating influence spreads throughout the body "like a drop of sandalwood oil"; *jñāna* and *karma* are regarded as *samuccaya* (held together); *bhakti* is essential; and *sat-kārya-vāda* is espoused without assuming the unreality of the effect-state as Sankara does. But these agreements between the two may do no more than point to an ancient non-Advaitist tradition of interpretation of the Sūtras, to which both are indebted.

In any case the points of similarity mentioned above are not sufficient in themselves, especially without full consideration of the manner in which they are fitted into the total system, to warrant Dasgupta's conclusion that "the main difference that remains in this point (the relation of *Brahman* to the universe) is this, that Bhāskara does not think it necessary to introduce the concept of body and parts, or substance and attributes." In fact Bhāskara does use the concept of the 'parts' of *Brahman*, and even of the substance-attribute distinction though in a different way from Rāmānuja. But what is seriously questionable about this statement is the assumption that the *śarīra* and the *viśiṣṭa* concepts are some what peripheral. At least as far as Rāmānuja is concerned, they are of the essence of his system and in no sense 'introduced' into it. Both in the *Vedārtha-Saṃgraha* and *Śrī-Bhāṣya*, Rāmānuja develops his argument against Bhāskara (and Yādava) by referring principally and at great length to his *śarīra-śarīri-bhava*. In this he sees the solution to the dilemma the

Bhedābheda-vadin poses for himself when, by the intrinsic logic of his system, he implicates *Brahman* in the imperfections of the *cosmos*.

There are a number of points of significant divergence between Rāmānuja and Bhāskara which may be noted.

(1) Rāmānuja rejects the *aupādhika* doctrine¹⁶, which teaches that "a *jīva* is nothing but *Brahman* narrowed by the limitations of the mind-substance".¹⁷ Two consequences follow from this concept of *upādhi*, the first of which has already been referred to above. Srinivasachari¹⁸ expresses the point in this way: "If the *jīva* is *Brahman* conditioned by the *upādhis*, the imperfections of the *upādhis* should then be predicated of *Brahman* itself". With his fundamental view of the perfection of *Brahman*, this to Rāmānuja is an intolerable position to hold. Whether, of course, it is possible to consider *Brahman's* relation to the imperfections of the finite world as that of self to body, which is an organic, inseparable relation, without conceding that the essential, infinite self is also in some sense implicated in the finite, or whether it is even *desirable* to argue for such non-implication, is another question and will be touched on in the final chapter.

(2) The other closely related consequence of the *aupādhika* position is that *Brahman* becomes essentially identical with the *jīvātman*, the Advaitist position which Rāmānuja finds totally unacceptable. It is again surprising to find Dasgupta¹⁹ making the following assertion: "According to Rāmānuja (presumably in contrast to Bhāskara) 'difference' is felt as a result of ignorance and the 'difference' is therefore unreal. With Rāmānuja the identity of *Brahman* with the individual souls is the last word... 'Difference' as such has no reality but only modifies and determines the character of the identical subject to which it refers. The subject and its characteristics are identical." Now the significance given to these statements, and whether they are judged to be accurate or not, depends to a large extent on the exact meaning in the terms here used. Dasgupta seems to imply some special use of the word 'difference'. It is true that Rāmānuja's doctrine of *apṛthak-siddhi-sambandhana*²⁰ or "inseparable relationship"

precluded any sense of absolute ontological duality. But the very purpose of Rāmānuja's asserting such an eternal relation of dependence between *Brahman* and souls-matter was to deny the doctrine of *Kevala-advaita*. And in his argument against Bhāskara it becomes clear that the *abheda* aspect of Bhedābheda is a principal point of dissension, for *Brahman* must not be confused with *jivātman*. As this argument is contained in the second point of major divergence between Rāmānuja and Bhāskara, it is to this that we now turn.

(3) In his exposition of *sat-kārya-vāda*, Bhāskara rejected Sankara's interpretation implying *sat-karana-vāda*, which was that as all effected states are the unreal product of *māyā*, the causal condition must in reality persist unchanged, and no real difference can be posited between cause and effect. Bhāskara's teaching²¹ was that the effect is a real but different state of the causal substance. It is in this sense that difference can be asserted. But the reality of the effect is dependent upon the permanency of the causal substance. In the case of a jar, for example, the clay can be seen to persist throughout its effected state. Thus the causal state is the unchanging ground of the effected state, to the extent that identity of the two may also be asserted. It is in this way that Bhāskara was able to argue that *Brahman* the causal substance is both identical with *jivas* and universe, and at the same time is different from them—hence Bhedā-*abheda*. His understanding then of the *sat-kārya-vāda* is that "the cause contains the effect potentially and the effect is the cause actualised. The difference between cause and effect is in condition and not in kind (*avastha-bheda*, not *atyanta-bheda*)."²²

Expressed thus there may appear to be little difference from Rāmānuja's position, until it is remembered that this '*avastha*'-modification is understood by Bhāskara in terms of *Brahma-pariṇāma*. *Brahman* in the causal state is the unconditioned and in the effected state is the conditioned or finite.²³ It is precisely this doctrine which Rāmānuja modifies seriously by his *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva*.

Among the analogies with Bhāskara uses to describe the relationship of causal *Brahman* to effected *Brahman*, those of

milk and curds, fire and flames, sea and waves, as well as clay and jars, and iron and tools, are prominent.²⁴ While it is true that Rāmānuja also uses most of these in addition to his determinative self-body analogy, the viewpoint of the two diverges to such an extent that their application of the analogies differs. In connection with Bhāskara's use of the above analogies Dasgupta²⁵ says, "Just as individual souls are 'parts' (*aṃṣa*;²⁶ of *Brahman* so they cannot be said to be different from *Brahman*. But in their manifestation as 'parts', neither can they be said to be absolutely identical with *Brahman*." But more typical of Bhedābheda is precisely the assertion that identity and difference *can* be asserted at one and the same time. It is this thesis which Rāmānuja claims to be 'illogical'.²⁷

The manner in which Rāmānuja criticises Bhedābheda will be seen more exactly if we follow through the debate between them simulated by Rāmānuja in *Vedārtha saṃgraha*.²⁸

(4) There is first a discussion of the space-jug analogy,²⁹ which Van Buitenen says has been developed by Rāmānuja in a way slightly different from Bhāskara's own use of the analogy. According to Rāmānuja, Bhāskara says that jug-space is still space, yet it is different from main-space because it is limited by the jug containing it. But the limitations of jug-space cannot be said to effect main-space in any essential way. To this Rāmānuja replies that space cannot be divided up in such a way. But if one part is said to be so limited by finitude, then it must be said that all is so limited or affected by the micro-cosmic limitation. "Similarly since *Brahman* cannot be cut off (i.e., from his limited existence as the *jīva*) He would remain connected with the adjuncts (*upādhis*) in his entirety." The Bhedābheda reply is that though it may be conceded that there is no disconnection between jug-space and main-space, and that the former remains essentially space, yet localised space does have a distinct state not possessed by main-space. Rāmānuja retorts that if this were the case then by moving a jug about in space any part of the latter could at any one time be limited and again delimited. Applying this to *Brahman*'s relation to the universe "that would mean that the whole of *Brahman* could be conjoined with the adjunct and that

every moment he would be bound and released."³⁰ For Rāmānuja, the analogy clearly is inadequate to convey *Brahman's* relationship to the cosmic process as one of independence even though he is the substantial cause of that process.

(5) There then follows³¹ a debate with Yādavaprakāśa which eventually turns into a general criticism of Bhedābheda. "When the relationship between Lord and soul is described in terms of identity in essence,³² then it seems logically unsound to maintain difference; whereas it is sound when this identity is stated in terms of body-soul relationship. Contrary to you we can declare that the Lord's qualities are universal³³ including his sovereignty over all worlds etc., and the *sāmāna-adhikaraṇya* that retains its proper sense."

(6) At this point³⁴ Rāmānuja introduces the important debate with Bhāskara concerning the relation of *jāti* and *vyakti*. Bhāskara contends that all things possess the characteristic of being both identical and different in so far as they always possess the same generic characteristics and are also distinct as individual specimens of that class. Rāmānuja replies:³⁵ "If there is no difference between the *jāti* 'ox' and the *vyakti* 'hornless ox' (which is what the Bhedābheda says on its *abheda* side) it follows that the individual 'broken-horned ox' (which is also a member of the *jāti* 'ox')... If they are different (then according to the logic of the Bhedābheda position) the class does not exist at all in the individual, just as the class 'buffalo' does not exist in the individual 'horse'. This contradiction is plainly insoluble. Class, etc., constitute the generic structure (*samsthāna*) of a given thing and are consequently modifications (*prakāratva*) of that thing; hence the modifying attribute (*prakāra*) and the modified thing (*prakārin*) are different *padārthas*, (but?)³⁶ the modifying attribute has no separate function and cannot be separately apprehended (*prthag-anupalambha*) and the same generic structure can appear as modification in more than one thing."

(7) By thus redefining the nature of *jāti* and *vyakti* and their inter-relationship in terms of *prakāratva*, Rāmānuja has not only effected a criticism of an important argument in Bhedābheda,

but has also in his redefinition introduced the principal theme of his system. It is for Rāmānuja but a step from the *prakāra-prakārin* relationship to the *śarīra-śarīrin* relationship. Indeed, the relationship of "modifying attribute" to "modified thing" is definitively illustrated in the relationship of body to the embodied self,³⁷ and so by analogy in the universe-*Brahman* relationship.

What then do we conclude to be the essential significance of this obviously definitive, though not perhaps immediately illuminating idea? To suggest first another translation of the terms may be of some help. Instead of 'modifying attribute'³⁸ and 'modified thing' for *prakāra-prakārin*, we could suggest 'type' and 'typified.' Thus, in the case of the *danḍa-danḍin* it is clearly the staff being carried which 'typifies' the staff carrying-man. The use of the term 'staff' along with an unobtrusive suffix indicates what type of man is spoken of. It is the staff which is his 'typical' feature, as Rāmānuja himself argues in another place.³⁹ In the *Śrī-Bhāṣya* passage he also goes on to point out that any individual soul is known only in association with its particular body, the latter can thus be said to 'typify' the soul. He also defends his position by arguing that any two things need to be "apprehended by means of the same apparatus"⁴⁰ if they are to be "invariably perceived together." As this is not the case with body and soul, it is only the body which is perceived, though in fact the self is associated with it.

(8) It is in this same passage that we can see more clearly how the idea of *jāti* and its relationship to substance is also developed in the context of the *prakāra-prakārin* relationship. For it is said⁴¹ that "the relation of bodies to the self is strictly analogous to that of class characteristics and qualities to the substance in which they inhere."⁴² The order of this sentence makes it clear that discussion of the *jāti*-idea has preceded it. This is the *Śrī-Bhāṣya* passage in which Rāmānuja first introduces his *prakāra*-concept, the initial aim being to show that in *sāmāna-adhikaraṇya* sentences not only *jāti* and *guṇa* (class and quality) but also substance (*dravya*) may also be in the position of "determining

attributes" (*viśeṣaṇa*) in so far as they "constitute the body of something else." The logic by which this step is made is not difficult to follow, and the resulting concept does of course constitute one of great epistemological, and even more determinatively, of theological importance in Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭa-advaita system as a whole.

(9) But the argument in the passage immediately following this, in which the *prakāra-bhāva* is first introduced in *Srī-Bhāṣya*, does appear rather cumbersome.⁴³ Certain points, however, stand out fairly clearly. In this passage the determining relationship is said to be that of a substance to its various characteristics such as 'class', 'quality', etc. So statements which appear to identify one thing with another must be seen as predicating of that thing the same relationship which exists between a substance and its various 'ectypes'. This could perhaps be called the 'archetypal' relationship, and is of course another way of stating Rāmānuja's *sat-kārya*⁴⁴ outlook. In fact it further amplifies this basic doctrine, and indicates why it is that though Śankara, Bhāskara and Rāmānuja all hold the *sat-kārya-vāda*, their interpretation of it is so different. For in introducing the determinative *prakāra*-relationship, Rāmānuja attempts to combat the interpretation which both the Advaitin and the Bhedābheda-vādin put on the *sāmāna-adhikarāṇya* statements. The former we have already discussed; there can be no knowledge of any pure substance devoid of all relation to its typical class-features and particular qualities. Statements of apparent identification in themselves indicate that all substances are known and in fact exist in association with various predicative attributes, the principal of which is that of 'generic character', or 'class'. To say therefore that the latter is a '*prakāra*' of a substance is to say that the substance is explicitly typified or specified in the various categories of 'generic character', etc. Though it is the substance which is determinative of these various specifications, from the epistemological view point the substance is always known in association with its *prakāra*. Thus although total identity is ruled out (the *prakārin* being always in association with its typifying *prakāra*), Rāmānuja at the same time avoids the position that would make the *prakārin*

dependent upon its *prakāra*. It would seem to be this idea which he intends to express when saying that "what determines statements of co-ordination is thus only the relation of 'mode' (*prakāra*) in which one thing stands to another..."⁴⁵ In other words, the nature of the relationship intended when two things are placed in 'co-ordination' in the Vedantic text is exactly that of a *prakāra* to its *prakārin*, or a thing explicitly typified and defined to that upon which it depends implicitly for its very existence, even though the *prakārin* may only be cognisable by means of its *prakāra*.

(10) The translation with which Thibaut continues the passage cited immediately above is surely misconceived. For one thing it appears to contradict what Rāmānuja says previously in the same passage about the relation of substance to class, etc., (viz. "... the relation of 'mode' only" in which generic character and qualities stand to substances). In the sentence in question the text is as follows: '*prakāratvam-eva sāmāna-adhikarāṇya-nibandhanam, na-paraspara-vyāvṛtta jātyā-dāyah*'. Thibaut's translation⁴⁶ runs: "What determines statements of co-ordination is thus only the relation of 'mode' in which one thing stands to another, not the relation of generic character, quality, and so on, which are of an exclusive nature (and cannot therefore be exhibited in co-ordination with substances)." Is it not a misplaced negative, which has made it necessary to insert the explanatory parenthesis, that has resulted in a misrepresentation of Rāmānuja's thought? Would the following simpler form not be more correct? "It is the typifying relationship alone which determines the meaning of *sāmāna-adhikarāṇya* sentences, for generic character and other qualities are not mutually exclusive (but stand in a *prakāra-prakārin* relationship)." There is the problem here of course that what is assumed by the Advaitin opponent is not that there is 'mutual exclusion' but total identity. To this it could be answered that *vyāvṛtta* has the more primary meaning of 'covering'. Or it could be that Rāmānuja is here referring to the Bhedābheda view of the difference of *jāti* and *vyakti*, and it is to this point made more explicitly in *Vedārtha-Saṃgraha* that we must now return.

(11) We have already noted that against the Bhedābheda-vādin Rāmānuja has to argue on two fronts, both the *bheda*-aspect and the *abheda*-aspect. In the case of the latter he admits⁴⁷ that any term denoting a generic class will also denote all the individuals within that class. But this in no sense proves the identity of the two. And when the attempt is made to prove the *difference* of *jāti* and *vyakti*, even greater contradiction is involved. It would have to be admitted that the relationship between 'cow' and 'broken-horned cow' is no more than that between 'buffalo' and 'horse.' In other words there must be some relationship between generic class and an individual of that class which is quite distinct from the relationship of individuals of various classes to each other. While there is no identity, neither is there independence and Rāmānuja⁴⁸ sees this character of 'inseparable relationship' in that of *prakāra* to *prakārin*. This relationship is found not only between *jāti* and *vyakti* but also on the one hand between substance and its typical characteristics, and on the other hand between the self and that with which it is typically associated, the body.

(12) Statements which appear to be identity judgements show the same kind of relationship of terms. For the arguments in *Vedārtha-Saṃgraha* continues: "The judgement 'this is he' is founded upon identity of mode (*prakāra-aikyāt*), in the same manner as the judgement 'this one is a man-with-a-stick.' And this very *prakāratva*, of class, etc., is declared to be the differentiation (*bheda*) of a given thing. The possession of such a differentiating attribute furnished the ground on which we treat (*vyavahārahetu*) a thing as different (*bhinna*). The *prakāratva* is at once the ground for acting upon the difference and for acting on the thing itself, in the same way as awareness... Only an entity that has a definite generic structure (*samsthāna-samsthita*)-class, etc.,—is apprehended by perception..." The argument concludes:⁴⁹ "All the *śrutis*...propound that Brahman himself is modified⁵⁰ by all spiritual and non-spiritual entities: (a) since it is learnt from them that the Supreme Brahman is the soul of all and that all entities, spiritual and non-spiritual, constitute his body, (b) since the body is a *padārtha*⁵¹ only by virtue of its function of modifying⁵² the being it embodies; and, (c) since, although body and embodied being have different

properties, they are not confused with each other." Rāmānuja then goes on to argue⁵³ how it is that a body can be regarded as such a *prakāra*.

(13) Now it may be suspected that Rāmānuja is adding little to his earlier argument against the idea of Advaita that reality is non-different. It perhaps also may be suspected that the *prakāra-prakāri-bhāva* is merely a kind of technical term indicating the vague notion that although there undoubtably is difference and non-difference in the scheme of things, this cannot be expressed in the Bhedā-abheda-style of logic, but only in less exact terms of organic relationship. There may be an element of truth in this suspicion, in that it is one of the more subtle of Rāmānuja's doctrines and seems to defy precise definition. Nevertheless its importance should be recognised, and that far more so than most commentators seem to have done.⁵⁴ For it forms to a large extent the link between epistemology and ontology,⁵⁵ especially as it relates on the one hand to the *sāmāna-adhikaraṇya* concept, and on the other to the *śarīra-śarīrin* concept, and (in conjunction with the *sāmāna-adhikaraṇya* concept) it is the means by which Rāmānuja is able not only to show the logical impossibility of holding to difference and identity in the way Bhedābheda attempted to, but as we shall now see also to provide a quasi-logical basis for the organic style of difference-in-unity he advocates through his *śarīra-ātma* notion.

(14) A skeleton outline of this argument is provided in the three reasons given, in the passage cited above, for claiming that all *cit* and *acit* is the *prakāra* of Brahman. He first refers back to his thesis that just as Brahman is the self of the universe so the universe is in the relation of body to Brahman. Building on this basic thesis he then says that only in so far as a body functions as *prakāra* to the thing it embodies can it be referred to as a definite '*padārtha*'. Though this literally translates meaning of a word', it normally has the meaning of 'substantial entity', or 'category'. And Rāmānuja appears to be interpreting the word with the slightly extended meaning of 'that which functions as a concrete, spatial, cognisable entity in distinction from other entities.' This idea is brought out

further in his third reason which is that both body and that which it embodies (and hence *prakāra* and *prakārin*) have in common properties which make them determinable, distinct entities, though there is no mutual confusion of these properties.⁵⁶

(15) It now begins to emerge a little more clearly how it is that Rāmānuja is able to use this *prakāra-prakārin* idea in association with the *śarīra-śarīrin* ideas as such an important point in his anti-Bhedābheda polemic, as well as in his anti-Advaita stand. But before further attempting to elucidate this argument, we should note a passage in *Vedārtha-Saṃgraha*,⁵⁷ where Rāmānuja himself elaborates on this thesis. "All terms that denote *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*—modes (*prakāra*) of the Lord—whether in subtle or in their gross phase,⁵⁸ denote in their primary sense the Supreme Spirit as being differentiated by the modes they constitute⁵⁹, in the very same manner as the terms god, man, etc., in their primary sense denote the embodied soul that is their modified substratum,⁶⁰ since the diverse evolved products of *prakṛti*—such as god, man, etc.—are *padārthas* only in so far as they are modifications of the embodied soul⁶¹ thus all terms denoting any spiritual and non-spiritual entity denote in their primary senses the Supreme Spirit, since that entity denoted modifies the Supreme Spirit by constituting his body.⁶² The relation between soul and body means the relation between substratum and dependent entity incapable of functioning separately,⁶³ between transcendent controller and thing controlled,⁶⁴ between principal and accessory.⁶⁵ In this relationship the one term is called *ātman* or 'soul' because this is the one who obtains an *object* since he is in all respects the substratum, the controller and the principal; the other term is called body, i.e., form because it is a *modification*⁶⁶ that is inseparably connected⁶⁷ since it is in all respects a dependent entity, a thing controlled and accessory. For such is the relation between the individual soul and its body. Consequently, in as much as all constitute the body of the Supreme Spirit, he can be denoted by all terms."

(16) The *prakāra* then, exists on the basis of, and is always known and always functions in connection with its *prakārin*,

There is, at least epistemologically and functionally, eternal togetherness, but it is the *prakārin* which determines the character of its *prakāra* and indeed which gives it its typical features, in particular its existence as a *padārtha* or separately cognisable and functioning entity. And because Rāmānuja is able to apply this new organically relational viewpoint both to the *jāti-vyakti* argument of Bhāskara, and to the soul-body relationship which he sees as an intrinsic analogy of the *Brahman*-universe relationship, he is able to offer an alternative to the logically impossible position of Bhāskara, which tries to include *advaita* and absolute *advaita* at one and the same time.

(17) It was noted in the first point of divergence that the *aupādhika* doctrine results in the ultimate identity of *Brahman* and *jīvātman*. Indeed Lacombe refers to all Bhedābheda as 'pantheisme' but this would seem to be an over-generalising. It is significant that the two powers of *Brahman* posited by Bhāskara as the means of the *pariṇāma-process* are *bhogyā* and *bhoktṛ*. *Bhoktṛ-śakti* or 'the creative power which causes the enjoying subject' brings about the existence of the *Jivas*, which are *Brahman* in manifest state. Other orders of the universe are also *Brahman* in manifest state, but are caused by his *bhogyā-śakti*, or 'power which causes the enjoyed object'. These two *śaktis* seem to be at two different levels in relation to *Brahman*,⁶⁸ for that which is *bhogyā* is a limited, conditioned, almost distorted manifestation of the essential *Brahman*. And while this is different from *Brahman* in a *svābhāvika* or essential way, the *jivas*, which become involved in this *bhogyā*-existence by *samsāra*, are only different from *Brahman* in an *aupādhika* way, or by virtue of their conditioned, embodied existence.

Rāmānuja differed from this teaching in two major ways.

(a) Firstly, in place of this *bhokta-bhogyā* dual differentiation, with *Brahman* implicated (though in dissimilar ways) in both through his self-transformation, Rāmānuja teaches a three-fold differentiation, *bhokta*, *bhogyā* and the transcendent *Brahman* who rules the other two entities as a soul directs its body. This does not imply that the soul (*Brahman*) creates its body (the universe) from nothing. The creative process

by which the *sūkṣma*-condition emerges as the manifest *sthūla*-condition is not one of *creative-ex-nihilo*. But for Rāmanuja, whether in unmanifest or manifest state, the *bhokta* and *bhogyā*, and *prakṛti*, or *cit* and *acit*, are eternally in a state of dependence on their Inner Ruler, and this Ruler is eternally differentiated from the changes and imperfections of the creative process.⁶⁹

(b) Secondly, Rāmanuja asserted the eternally distinct nature of the *jīvās*.⁷⁰ The *acit* also is eternal, but eternally subject to change. The only sense in which the *jīvās* can be said to change is that when they are in the state of *pralaya* or in *sūkṣma*-state and unmanifest, they are virtually immersed in *Brahman*, though never entirely so.⁷¹ Two reasons can be suggested for Rāmanuja to stress the eternal nature of the *jīvās*, and it does not seem adequate merely to point out that this idea originated from Sāṃkhya and was taken over from the teaching of that school through his own sectarian background.

The two main reasons for Rāmanuja to stress the beginningless nature of the *jīvās* are :

(i) It is of great importance to preserve the perfection of the Supreme self, so that the imperfections of the creative process cannot be attributed to him or be said to originate from him in any way. Therefore, because Vedānta assumes as a matter of course that the process of creation and absorption (*pralaya*) is a beginningless process, Rāmanuja found it necessary to posit the *jīva*'s actions as the source of all the imperfections which are associated (apparently intrinsically) with the course of *samsāra*. And while the *jīva* itself may be thought of as intrinsically pure and even *Brahman*-like,⁷² nevertheless the association of *karmic* forces with the *jīvas* is beginningless, and the Supreme self cannot be thought of as either originating or associated with the imperfections of the creative process, even though he is both material and effective cause of the process. The particular forms it takes in relation to the *jīvas*, in many cases being an apparently inferior, perhaps painful form, is determined by the *karma* for which those *jīvas* themselves are responsible.⁷³ There is obviously a

degree of tension here between the causality of *Brahman* and that of *karma*, hence the need to establish the positive position of the *jīvas* in this process as a whole.

(ii) Rāmanuja also wishes to maintain the differentiated state of the *jīvas* in relation to *Brahman* even in the life of *mukti* with *Brahman*.⁷⁴ While Bhāskara also held to the idea of atomic souls, there is little doubt that this was not their ultimate character as far as he was concerned. Just as they had emanated from *Brahman* by his *bhokta-sakti* and were only different from him in an *aupādhika* conditioned sense, so they were yet to be absorbed back into him.⁷⁵ There was nothing of the notion of eternal *apṛthak-sambandhana*, or relationship of inseparability, so characteristic of Rāmanuja. This leads to the final point of divergence between these two.

(18) Although Bhāskara acknowledged the need for *bhakti* in the attainment of *mukti*, the character of devotion in his teaching differs considerably from that taught by Rāmanuja, and largely because the object of devotion is so differently understood. The terms used by Bhāskara for the devotee's relationship with *Brahman* are *rāga* ('intimate attachment'), *samārādhana* ('adoration'), *dhyāna* ('contemplation') and also *bhakti*. Naturally the pantheistic tendency in Bhāskara's system made it necessary for him to make some sort of qualifying distinction in the nature of the *Brahman* so as to be a proper object for such devotion. So in the words of Dasgupta :⁷⁶ "Such meditation can be directed to *niṣprapanca-Brahman*, who transcends his manifestations as the world of forms. But although transcendent *Brahman* may be meditated upon—pure being, intelligence and infinite, these are qualities of *Brahman* the substance and 'neither can any substance remain without its qualities nor can any qualities remain without their substance.'" Although this latter quotation from Bhāskara's *Bhāṣya* expresses a similar epistemological position to Rāmanuja's, for both recognise the impossibility of any real devotional relationship on any other basis than that of *saguṇa-Brahman*, there is also a distinct divergence in their respective viewpoints. This *niṣ-prapanca-saguṇa-Brahman* appears almost as peripheral in the Bhedābheda system as a whole.

Thus Brahman as an object of devotion cannot be said to be so totally integrated with the ontology and cosmology of the system as is the case with *Viśiṣṭa-advaita*.

Yādavaprakāśa also merits some consideration as Pre-Rāmānuja Bhedābheda-vādin, especially in that he was probably Rāmānuja's first Vedāntic teacher, though his doctrine was soon repudiated by his pupil. It is, however, less easy to ascertain the precise nature of Yādavaprakāśa's teaching than is the case with Bhāskara. Dasgupta states⁷⁷ that "the details of Yādavaprakāśa's views are not known, but it is very probable that he was a monist." More usually he is described (as by Rāmānuja⁷⁸ himself) as a Bheda-bheda teacher, though this in no way precludes a monistic emphasis, and indeed, as was seen in the case of Bhāskara, in the Bheda-bheda position there seems to be a propensity for the *abheda* aspect to dominate in the ontological and cosmological thought of the school, and for the *bheda* aspect to remain something of an epistemological device. In any case, it is the monistic (or to use Lacombe's terminology 'pantheistic') tendency in Yādavaprakāśa which receives most severe censure in Rāmānuja's critique.

(a) For example to Yādavaprakāśa is attributed "the view that God himself constitutes, in his essence, the various creatures in essence."⁷⁹ His criticism of this notion then follows lines similar to those adopted in the anti-Bhāskara polemic. When the *bheda* aspect of this theory is propounded (i.e., that although *Brahman* is essentially manifest as the universe, this does not exhaust his essence) Rāmānuja argues that if it is claimed that clay can exist by itself distinct from its particular functioning as jug, bowl, etc., this would result in the existence of two different Lords, or at least a Lord to divided that he would be like Devadatta with "one hand anointed with sandal-paste and adorned with bracelets and rings, and his other hand hit by a hammer and burning with hell-fire."⁸⁰

(b) In *Śrī-Bhāṣya* this polemic against Yādavaprakāśa⁸¹ is more specific, where the doctrine attributed to him is as follows. Brahman, as pure, undifferentiated being, is the causal substance, "endowed with all possible potentialities." In the

creative process, however, this pure *Brahman* transforms himself into "a triad of constituent parts, viz., enjoying subjects, objects of enjoyment, and a ruler (i.e., *Īśvara*)."⁸² Rāmānuja immediately rejects this notion by claiming that scripture teaches:

(i) That there is one supreme cause (both material and efficient) who is *Brahman*, the Lord of Lords, free from all imperfection.

(ii) That this *Brahman* and *Īśvara* (or *Nārāyaṇa*) are identical.

(iii) That *Brahman* can neither be known nor be said to exist as 'pure being,' *sat* being in no way superior to or in fact different from 'the Lord.'

(c) The argument then develops in a rather interesting way.⁸³ "If, moreover, mere being is held to be the self of all, and the Lord only a particular part of it, this would imply the stultification of all those texts which declare the Lord to be the general self and the whole of which all beings are parts."⁸⁴ Should it be said in reply to this that "as Being in general is fully present in all its parts, and hence also in that part which is the Lord, all other things may be viewed as having their self, in, and being parts of him (i.e., the Lord)," then Rāmānuja retorts that we would have to infer from this and the preceding arguments that "as Being in general is fully present in the jar, the Lord is a part of the jar and has his self in that." 'Jar' being a specific of clay, is normally used in an illustrative sense. But by this literal use of the analogy Rāmānuja effectively shows up the consequences of this strand of Bhedābheda thought.

(d) He goes on to argue that all predicative statements about being, show it (*sat*) to be an attribute, and "by the 'being' of a thing we understand the attribute of its being suitable for some definite practical effect."⁸⁵ This 'functional' attitude of Rāmānuja is an important aspect of his ontology. We have already noted his definition of *prakāra*, and in particular of body, as a distinct '*padārtha*,' which "exists as a definite entity with a definite function." He goes on to claim that it is not only substances which possess the character of 'being', and thus are ultimately 'real', for actions too have

this same character.⁸⁶ If they did not, it would have to be said that actions are non-existent. Nor can it be said that actions only have 'being' in so far as connected with substances, for this would then make it difficult to show that being is "everywhere of one and the same nature"⁸⁷—necessary on Yādavaprakāśa's own premiss that pure *Brahman* is the causal substance of all things.

(e) Then comes Rāmānuja's perhaps most serious point—if everything were non-different by virtue of possessing the character of 'being,' "there would be universal consciousness of the nature of everything,"⁸⁸ thus confusing "all good and evil." It is this which is so unthinkable from Rāmānuja's theistic viewpoint. And it is undoubtedly his transcendent theological premiss which lies behind to his 'functional' view of 'being' in general and the body, especially the universe viewed as the body of Brahman, in particular. It is the notion that the universe is *instrumental* to the will of the Lord that dominates all else.⁸⁹ In a secondary sense this 'functional' view can be applied to the individual soul. On the one hand it determines the actions of its instrument the body (in so far as the Lord permits), and on the other hand it continues in a subject-object relationship with the Lord, thus even in the state of *mukti* showing itself to be "suitable for some practical effect," and so possessing ultimate 'being'.

CHAPTER VIII

RAMANUJA AND SAMKHYA

Most writers on Indian philosophy assume that Rāmānuja, more than other Vedāntins, reverts to ideas belonging to the Sāmkhya system. Karl Potter¹ for example, while, attempting primarily to examine the notions of causality and the dependence relations consequent to this in the various schools, writes thus: "Rāmānuja's theory is not different from Īśvarakṛṣṇa's in its view of the nature of the dependence relation." And although Rāmānuja "reduced the dualism of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* found in Sāmkhya to a unity, Potter contends that "the *pariṇāma* relation is merely relocated and, in point of fact, reduplicated. Where Īśvarakṛṣṇa denied any relation between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, Rāmānuja finds the relation in the common character of selves and matter as aspects of *Brahman*." What Potter sees as a basic similarity is brought out even more clearly in his interesting classification-table² of fifteen of the philosophies of India. Seven categories are listed as "basic divisions", Rāmānuja and Sāmkhya being classed together throughout.³ In a similar manner the standard textbooks of Indian Philosophy tend to describe Rāmānuja as taking over Sāmkhya cosmology and psychology in general, and in particular the notion of a primal cosmic substance from which the universe evolves; the notion of the *jīvas* as eternal, distinct entities of the *sat-kārya-vāda* and its complement the *pariṇāma-vāda*; and the *tri-guṇa* concept, as well as other points of detail.

Similarity of expression in various doctrines was inevitable, by reason of the influence of Sāmkhya on Rāmānuja's basic sources, including *Upaniṣads*,⁴ *Mahābhārata*,⁵ *Gītā*,⁶ *Purāṇas* and *Pañca-rātra*.⁷ The *Gītā* in particular was heavily indebted to the Sāmkhya description of the cosmic process. Rāmānuja's close affinity with the *Gītā*'s viewpoint thus meant an inevitable affinity with certain aspects of Sāmkhya thought.

But we may seriously doubt the suggestion that Rāmānuja bases his system upon Sāmkhya⁸ presuppositions. In particular we may challenge the idea of continuity of intention between Sāmkhya-style cosmology especially its causal concepts, and the cosmological basis of Rāmānuja's system.

We can note in passing that some scholars⁹ have seen closer fundamental agreement between the Sāmkhya scheme and Advaita, than between Rāmānuja and Sāmkhya, though in Advaita generally Sāmkhya-style cosmological schemes are relegated to the secondary *vyāvahārika* level.

The origins of Sāmkhya¹⁰ are of course notoriously obscure but it seems probable that the earliest pre-Kapila forms of Sāmkhya,¹¹ and certainly its final forms,¹² were more similar in certain features to Viśiṣṭadvaita. But classical Sāmkhya as expounded for example by Īśvarakṛṣṇa,¹³ was more akin to Advaita. Perhaps the principal point of this affinity is in the respective teaching of Advaita and Sāmkhya on the self, its relation to empirical existence and the process by which it is released. For even though there is divergence between the many separate *puruṣas* of Sāmkhya¹⁴ and the concept of one *Ātma-tattva* in Advaita, the concept of the pure *puruṣa* in the former and the pure *Ātman* in the latter is strikingly similar. In both systems the pure self and the empirical *jīva* are distinguished. In both the pure self becomes the empirical *jīva* "when it is confused with the narrow bounds of individuality."¹⁵ In both the attributes of the active object *prakṛti* becomes superimposed (*adhyāsa*) upon this pure, passively witnessing subject (*sākṣin*). In both it is by the realisation through *jñāna* or *viveka*, of the self's real status that *mukti* is effected, and that immediately (*jīvan-mukti*).

It could be objected that in view of the different concept of this 'real status', viz., for Sāmkhya the realisation of the individual self's pure isolation from *prakṛti*, and for Advaita that of the self's absolute identity with the *Brahman* of pure-consciousness, the similarities are superficial. But it is worth noting that some writers,¹⁶ have taken the view that originally in Sāmkhya also a single world-soul was asserted. According

to this view the later theistic element was entirely a late Sāmkhya-Yoga aberration. This is certainly a possibility, even if the idea of an original single-soul is rejected.

We now turn to Rāmānuja's debate with Sāmkhya to discover more precisely the difference of outlook between the two. Numerous and extensive sections in *Śrī-Bhāṣya*¹⁷ are of an anti-Sāmkhya polemical nature. At one point in the *Vedārtha-Saṃgraha*, in which there is much less debate with Sāmkhya, Rāmānuja classifies it along with "the Cārvakas, the Buddhists Vaiśeṣikas, Naiyāyikas, Jainas, and the followers of Patañjali", who are all condemned alike."¹⁸ Van Buitenen¹⁹ has suggested that a more characteristic assessment is found in *Śrī-Bhāṣya*²⁰ where, making his defence of Śāṇḍilya's Pāñcārātra, Rāmānuja quotes the *Mahā-bhārata* text which says that Sāmkhya and their doctrines are "worthy of regard." But Rāmānuja, goes on to claim that while Sāmkhya, Yoga and Pāsupata are of human origin and therefore have some doctrines that are "mutually contradictory", Pāñcārātra was revealed by Narayana himself, and in fact includes within it "the essential points in all these doctrines." In another passage²¹ with reference to Sāmkhya, he points out the dangers where formal similarities appear, for this may "give rise to the erroneous view of its being the true doctrine."

(1) Rāmānuja's principal point of dissension from Sāmkhya concerns the latter's view that creation is brought about by *prakṛti* (*Pradhāna*²²) a restlessly active substratum of nature, projecting itself into existence as this multiformed universe. In the *pralaya* state the three *guṇas* that comprise *Prakṛti*, i.e., *sat*, *rajas*, *taṃas* (the real or good, passion or vigour, and darkness or heaviness)²³ are in a state of perfect equipoise and *Prakṛti* is said to be acquiescent and unevolved. It is when this balance is disturbed that self-evolution of *Prakṛti* occurs. But no rational explanation for this disturbance is attempted, nor is any suggested for the subsequent involvement of *Puruṣa* in *Prakṛti* after it emerges in its manifest state, as Rāmānuja points out in his argument. The evolutionary process is said to be as follows; from *prakṛti* emerges *buddhi*, from *buddhi*

ahamkāra, from *ahamkara manas*: and from *manas* the five senses and the organs of action, from *ahamkāra* the five *tat-mātras* or subtle elements which are the objects of the five senses; in conjunction with these are the five gross elements by means of which the above *pañcendriyas* function.

(2) Rāmānuja does not argue with this description of the cosmic process as an attempt to explain the chain of phenomenal and sensory experience. But an obviously important point of difference from the Sāmkhya view of this process is that for Rāmānuja, with his conviction that *Brahman* alone is the material and efficient cause of all things, there must be some other *ground* and *end* for the process than the unintelligibly innate tendency posited by the Sāmkhya. Such a divergent view of the nature of the ground and end of universal existence involves substantially different view of the process itself, however the descriptive-details may agree, and it is for this reason that the usual evaluation of the Rāmānuja's indebtedness to Sāmkhya cannot be accepted.

(3) Some of the anti-Sāmkhya passages to be found in *Sri-Bhāṣya* are points of scriptural exegesis. Sāmkhya holds a quite different view from Rāmānuja of the authority of *śruti* and its relation to *tarka* and *smṛti*. This comes out clearly in II. i. 1-4, where Rāmānuja takes Sāmkhya to task for giving too much weight to logical argument (*tarka*) and traditional writings (*smṛti*) when these disagree with the teachings of *śruti*.²⁴ It may be thought that when the criteria for accepting any *pramāṇa* or assured doctrinal basis differs in this way, there is little value in scoring up points of scriptural exegesis. In fact in the course of this exegesis certain very important differences are seen in their respective view points. For example, in I. i. 5 it is stated that the texts which declare world origination by *Brahman* cannot be said to refer to *Pradhāna* "which rests on inference (*anumāna*) only."²⁵

(4) It is clear that Sāmkhya regards *anumāna* or the processes of logical inference as sufficient to prove the existence of *Pradhāna*.

(i) In this the principles of the Nyāya-school are followed. Thus we find in the *Sāmkhya-Kārika* by Īśvarakṛṣṇa that five proofs for the existence of *Pradhāna* are put forward.²⁶ (a) Every individual thing is spatially limited, which points to dependence on something external to itself and not finite. (b) Every individual thing has "certain pervasive characteristics," pointing to some common source of derivation. (c) Evolutionary development reveals an active principle of manifestation, the whole process not being identifiable with any one stage. (d) Effected states show features not found in the cause (though they are said to inhere potentially therein) so we cannot say that a finite and conditioned world is its own cause. (e) The universe is manifestly a unity, which suggests a single cause. Thus basically these arguments are from contingency, co-inherence, teleology, causal differentiation, and universality.

(ii) Rāmānuja had already argued (in *S'ri-Bhāṣya*)²⁷ that the use of *tarka* and *anumāna* to establish the existence of *Brahman* is invalid, the primary reason for this being that as the transcendent cause, both substantially and effectively, of the universe, it is *Brahman* who is the definitive category by whom "all things are known." And it is exactly on this issue that Rāmānuja makes his initial criticism of the Sāmkhya concept that *Pradhāna* is the ultimate universal cause. In the course of the debate²⁸ Kapila is made to say, "This (doctrine of *Pradhāna*) establishes the non-difference of cause and effect, and in this way the promise²⁹ that through the knowledge of one thing all things are to be known admits of being fulfilled."

(iii) The Sāmkhya use of *anumāna* in this issue appears to reverse the intention of this Upaniṣadic principle, which became axiomatic for Vedānta. For the inferential arguments appear to make the one essential, universal 'thing' apprehendable through the knowledge of 'all things.' Rāmānuja's epistemology does make use of empirical and pragmatic principles at times, but it cannot be stretched to this extent of making the one-many principle reversible. This is obviously related to the important question of the nature of the cause-effect identity which is posited in the *sat-kārya* notion,

accepted by both Sāmkhya and Rāmānuja. This is to be discussed at some length later in this chapter, but it may be noted here that Sāmkhya, as well as Rāmānuja, accepts in principle the irreversible nature of this effect-existent-in-the-cause relationship.³⁰ Unlike the Naiyāikas' argument, the effect is not something new, but the cause is, nevertheless, independent of the effect, the relation between them not being one of reciprocal non-difference. What the Sāmkhya assumes, however, as does all cosmological argument, is that there will be sufficient identifiable features in common between cause and effect for the nature of the effect.³¹

(5) This unilateral attitude towards the cause-effect relationship is also accompanied in Sāmkhya by an innate though inexplicable teleological tendency. Thus when *prakṛti* projects itself, which it does in some way both for the sake of *Puruṣa* and in response to the presence of *Puruṣa*, there is also a further inexplicable 'concomitant power' (*sahakāri-śakti*) required to activate the causal state that it may evolve into effected state. This is said³² to be in the same manner as seeds need to be crushed in order to obtain oil from them. Moreover this activity only takes place when certain concomitant conditions are also present, these being³³ place, time, and the form and constitution of a thing. In other words, although all things evolve from the single origin *Prakṛti*, and therefore in theory any effect could be imagined to spring from any cause, due to activity of *sahakāri-śakti* and its accompanying conditions, particular causes only produce particular effects.

In *S'ri-Bhāṣyā* I-i.5 Rāmānuja argues that the Sāmkhya view of *Pradhāna*-origination is immediately disproved by the *Chāndogya* passage³⁴ which says, "It thought, may I be many..." As a non-intelligent entity *Pradhāna* is incapable of thinking, claims Rāmānuja. This argument could be dismissed as scriptural fundamentalism. But when he goes on to say³⁵ that "in all sections which refer to creation the act of creation is stated to be preceded by thought", he is asserting his faith in an intelligent, purposive, personal Supreme Being as the only intelligible cause of the creative process. The classical Sāmkhya

view on the other hand never provides an explanation for the innate teleological tendencies it asserts. We have noted the possibility that original Sāmkhya did provide some kind of theistic explanation, though this thesis raises the problem of why "Sāmkhya rejected the idea of the Absolute which alone could make the system satisfactory."³⁶

In any case, the later emergence of *Seṣvara-Sāmkhya* (Theistic) must in part have been due to the persistence of the question, 'Why does the cosmic process move in the direction it does?' There seems little doubt that a theistic answer was eventually reached (or reverted to?) through the influence of the Yoga school. For although Yoga was originally distinct from Sāmkhya, it was able to provide both the technique for the disengagement of *Puruṣa* from *Prakṛti*, and eventually also the theory undergirding the teleology implicit in Sāmkhya. Originally in Yoga the released soul known as *Īśvara* may have been solely an aid to concentration and an object of meditation.³⁷ But Yoga too was troubled by the question (in Dasgupta's words)³⁸ of "how the blind tendency of the non-intelligent *prakṛti* can bring forth this order and harmony of the universe, how it can determine what course of evolution will be of the best service to the *puruṣas*..." Even in Sāmkhya-Yoga or *Seṣvara-Sāmkhya* *Īśvara* never becomes the creative cause as we shall see, in the material sense, or even in the effective sense as understood by Rāmānuja. *Īśvara* "only disturbs the equilibrium of *prakṛti* in its acquiescent state, and later on helps it to follow an intelligent order by which the fruits of *karma* are properly distributed and the order of the world is brought about."

(6) In the course of his exegesis of the text, "It thought, etc." Rāmānuja comes very close to the Sāmkhya's own cosmological argument that a single originating course (in the Sāmkhya's case *Prakṛti*) can be *inferred* from the character of the universe. He is in fact attempting to turn the Sāmkhya's argument back upon himself, for we shall find that it is a favourite attack of theirs to show the disparity of the imperfection of the universe and the perfection that is claimed for *Brahman*.

"But (you Sāmkhyas will say) it is a rule that as a cause we must assume only what corresponds to the effect."—Just so; and what corresponds to the total aggregate of effects is the highest Person, all knowing, all powerful, whose purposes realise themselves, who has minds and matter in their subtle state for his body.³⁹ (i.e., subtle when in causal state; they do not cease to be his body when manifest). Rāmānuja realises just how close to the Sāmkhyas' own position he has allowed himself to come, for he immediately denies that there is any "intention of setting forth an inference." His intention rather is this—given the revelation through scripture that *Brahman* is material and efficient cause, we subsequently find that this alone is sufficient explanatory cause of the effects in a universe comprised of manifold expressions of *cit* and *acit*.

(7) In the subsequent debate Rāmānuja makes the further point that cosmological principle must be compatible with soteriological aim. For it is perhaps his most important argument in this passage that not even the protagonists of the *Pradhāna* theory claim that through *Pradhāna* final release can be obtained, whereas this is just what is promised in scripture for those meditating upon *Brahman* as universal cause. If a Sāmkhya follower should by any chance make the claim that release is possible through meditation on *Pradhāna*, the only result of such meditation would be "unity with a non-sentient principle...and scripture, which is more loving than a thousand parents, cannot possibly teach such union with the Non-sentient, which is acknowledged to be cause of the assaults of suffering, in its three fold form." It is with this same thought, viz., that any satisfactory universal cause must itself be dissociated from the imperfections of the manifest universe—that Rāmānuja closes this passage of anti-Sāmkhya argument: "Hence it remains a settled conclusion that the highest Person, Nārāyaṇa, free from all shadow of imperfection, etc., is the single cause of the whole universe, and is that *Brahman* which these Sūtras point out as the object of enquiry."⁴⁰

(8) The only way, however, in which Rāmānuja is able to maintain that *Brahman* is both material cause of the universe and

yet is dissociated from its sufferings is by the use of his body-soul analogy, though this is not brought out explicitly in the above passage. But this *śarīra*-doctrine does comprise one of the key points in a further debate about the nature of cosmic origination found in the fourth *Pāda* of this first *adhyāya*. This begins⁴¹ with the contention that the 'avyakta' (unevolved) referred to in the *Kaṭha-Upaniṣad*⁴² is to be identified with the "body represented as a chariot in the simile of the body, i.e., in the passage instituting a comparison between the self, body, intellect and so on, on the one side, and the charioteer, chariot etc., on the other side." The reference to 'body' here is rather subtle. That it does not refer solely to the individual body (unless Ramanuja is inconsistent here) is indicated in a later passage where he identifies the 'avyakta' as the body of *Brahman* in unevolved state. "The creative principle enters into its creatures for the purpose of ruling them, and such entering in cannot be attributed to the non-sentient *Pradhāna*. The undeveloped therefore is *Brahman* in that state where its body is not yet developed."⁴³

It may be useful to examine this *Kaṭha* text, and Rāmānuja's explanation of it, in more detail. "Beyond the senses there are the objects, beyond the objects there is the mind, beyond the mind there is intellect, the great self is beyond the intellect. Beyond the Great there is the Unevolved, beyond the Unevolved there is the Person. Beyond the Person there is nothing—this is the goal, the highest road."⁴⁴ Sāmkhya naturally maintains that the 'unevolved' here means the *Pradhāna*, and the 'Person' the *Puruṣa*, thus bringing in the two ultimate principles of their system. But Rāmānuja points out⁴⁵ that in the passage preceding this, senses had been compared to horses, objects to roads, mind to reins, intellect to charioteer, the self being the agent served by the charioteer (that is the intellect). "Superior to that Self again is the body, compared to the chariot, for all activity whereby the individual self strives to bring about what is of advantage to itself depends on the body. And higher finally than the body is the highest Person, the inner Ruler and Self of all, the goal of the journey of the individual soul."⁴⁶ But the body, which in this passage

is compared to the chariot, is missing from the series of entities initially cited, indicating that there 'avyakta' is an oblique reference to the body. (Other variations from the cosmo-psychological process of Sāmkhya are also pointed out by Rāmānuja here).

To the question "How can the body be called the 'unevolved'?" Rāmānuja replies that this term refers to the elements or materiality in its subtle form, which "entering into a particular condition becomes the body" and which "when assuming certain states and forms, is capable of entering on activities promoting the interest of man."⁴⁷

To this idea of purposive activity on the part of matter in subtle state an objection is raised. If the 'avyakta' is understood as unevolved matter, why cannot the Sāmkhya interpretation that this is *Pradhāna* be allowed? So Rāmānuja points to the next Sūtra⁴⁸ ("subserves an end, on account of its dependence in him"). This means, he says, that "matter in its subtle state subserves ends in so far as it is dependent on the Supreme Person who is the cause of all."⁴⁹ He acknowledges the truth of many Sāmkhya notions, but at the same time points out the two mutually dependent features of his own system that make it fundamentally different from Sāmkhya. "We by no means wish to deny unevolved matter and all its effects in themselves (that is, *Pradhāna* in Rāmānuja's own terms is accepted as a cosmological principle) but in so far only as they are maintained not to have their Self in the Supreme Person. For the fact is that they constitute his body and He thus constitutes their self; and it is only through this their relation to him that the *Pradhāna*, and so on, are capable of accomplishing their several ends. Otherwise the different essential natures of them all could never exist, nor persist, nor act. It is just on the ground of this dependence on the Lord not being acknowledged by the Sāmkhyas that their system is disproved by us."⁵⁰

In other words, both the supremacy of *Brahman* as creator-Lord, and his substantial though unilateral relationship with the world of *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* as self to body, are seen by Rāmānuja as two essential features distinguishing Viśiṣṭadvaita from Sāmkhya.

(10) The question of what role the souls play in the creative process is the subject of a further debate⁵¹ which further proves the divergence between Rāmānuja and Sāmkhya. Sāmkhyā argues that when 'the Vedānta texts' refer to an intelligent principle as cause of the world, this must be one of the two Sāmkhya principles *Puruṣa* (*Jīvātman*) and *Prakṛti*, for only these are presented as objects of knowledge. Therefore it must be the soul which is revealed as cosmic cause and thus ruler of *Prakṛti*, even when the name '*Brahman*' is used. Thus the *Kauṣiṭaki* reference⁵² to "the maker of those persons to whom this work belongs", must speak of the individual soul, though not explicitly.⁵³ There are in fact three other related concepts which need to be brought in before the soul can be thought of as a creative entity.

(a) There is the *Karma*-concept, which figures predominantly in the ensuing debate, and in Rāmānuja's own teaching in general. This teaches that the particular forms of cosmic existence (or body-forms) associated with *jīvas* are determined by the various *karma-phalitas* or action-consequences of those *jīvas*. To this limited extent the souls could be said to play an effective part in creation, and to be "the makers of persons." In another context⁵⁴ Rāmānuja quotes with apparent approval this passage from the *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*:⁵⁵ "The being to be embodied requires nothing but an operative cause; it is its own potentiality (interpreted by Rāmānuja to mean *karman*) which leads to its being in that condition ..." In that passage *karman* is even suggested as an aspect of material causality. Here in I. iv. 16 however, Rāmānuja denies that there is any reference to *karma*-power as the means by which the soul could be said to be universal cause.

(b) There is also the *adhyāsa*-concept, by which Sāmkhya (rather like Advaita) teaches that the soul mistakenly imputes (or superimposes on) to itself the characteristics of *Prakṛti*, and thus takes on an epistemologically creative role, though the soul is essentially passive in character. Both these two possibilities are dismissed by Rāmānuja:⁵⁶ "It is not the insignificant individual soul which is under the influence of its good and evil works, and by erroneously imputing to itself the attributes

of *Prakṛti* becomes the cause of the effect of the latter—that is the topic of our text.”

(c) There is also the proximity-concept, in which the very nearness of *Puruṣa* is thought to evoke creative action on *Prakṛti*'s part. This notion however appears to be absent from the passage under discussion, though it is dealt with by Rāmānuja in a later section⁵⁷. And in general it must be said to take a more dominant roll in Sāmkhya than the *karma*-concept, assumed throughout though this may be. For in Sāmkhya the realism of the *pariṇāma*-notion is essentially limited to *Prakṛti*. *Puruṣa* remains passive and immutable in a manner more essential to the system as a whole than is the case with Rāmānuja. Thus the creative role of *karman* is related almost exclusively to *Prakṛti*, even though it is theoretically brought about by the action (*karman*) of the souls.

The more negative concept of *aviveka* or non-discrimination appears to dominate the realistic strand seen in the *karma-kāraṇa* or creative *karma* idea. In fact, in “so far as Sāmkhya teaches that it is only the empirical *jīva* which engages in action, it is neither the *Puruṣa* nor (as a consequence) *karman*, which provides the initial causal impetus that brings into being the cosmic process. *Karman* thus is in the general Sāmkhya scheme only a secondary category.

In this passage, however, it is Sāmkhya that is putting forward a *karma*-view of causality and Rāmānuja (following the Sūtra text) who denies it. For, claims Rāmānuja, the word “*karman*” here carries its more primary meaning of ‘work’ and refers to “the world”, and the Sūtra teaches, or “the entire Universe in so far as being the outcome of activity.”⁵⁸ Thus “the meaning implied here is although the origination of the world has for its condition the deeds of individual souls, yet these souls do not independently originate the means for their retributive experience, but experience only what the Lord has created to that end in agreement with their works. The individual soul, hence cannot stand in creative relation to those person.”⁵⁹ Thus it is only in a qualified sense that *karman* can be called the material cause of the world, or even of the body.

(11) In general, however, Sāmkhya would regard Rāmānuja as allowing too dominant a role to *karman*. In II.ii.3 it is said that if the various inequalities in cosmic existence are brought about by the various kinds of karmic influence, then the Lord's role in this must be thought of as minimal, and it could as well be said that “*Prakṛti*, impressed by the good and evil deeds of the souls, will by herself modify herself on such lines as correspond to the deserts of the individual souls.”⁶⁰

Rāmānuja's immediate answer is to refer to the ancient and unbroken Vedic tradition, in which it is taught that the essential factor in good and evil *karman* is “in their pleasing or displeasing the Supreme Person, and as to their results, viz., pleasure and pain, (they) depend on the grace or wrath of the Lord”⁶¹ There then follows one of the rare citations from Dramida⁶² some passages from the Gītā,⁶³ and then an impressive declaration of Rāmānuja's own intense theistic conviction in relation to the whole *karmic* structure within which the *jīvas* operate. Even the *jīvas*' capacity to “apply themselves on their own part, and in accordance with their own wishes, to work either good or evil”, is “imparted to them by the Lord”. And even though the soul has the status of a *karta*, yet the Supreme Lord can be said to have entered the soul and as “inner self abides within them, controlling them as an animating and cheering principle.”⁶⁴ Moreover, the aim of this *karma*-structured cosmic process is “ever to increase happiness to the highest degree, and to this end it is instrumental that (the Lord) should reprove...” The charge, therefore, that in view of the determining influence of *karman*, *Pradhāna* could, just as well as *Brahman*, take the causal role, cannot be said to stand.

(12) Nor can the Sāmkhya argument from *Puruṣa*'s nearness to *Prakṛti*. This claims that although the soul is itself inactive and *Prakṛti* devoid of the power of thought, “yet the non-sentient *Pradhāna* may begin to act owing to mere nearness of the soul”, as a blind man may be led by a lame man while carrying him, or as iron may be attracted by a magnet. But the analogies fail because on the Sāmkhya's own reckoning the soul must be thought of as “absolutely inactive”,⁶⁵ which both

lame man and magnet manifestly are not. A more substantial objection is that if such proximity alone were sufficient to initiate the creative activity of *Prakṛti*, then "it would follow that the creation also is eternal."⁶⁶ For Rāmānuja, as with most Indian cosmology, the creative process is thought of as eternally recurring in the cyclic pattern of *śṛṣṭi-sṭhiti-pralaya-śṛṣṭi*. Within a complete cycle or *kalpa* there will have been sufficient opportunity for the force of any soul's *karman* to be exhausted

(13) The discussion on the inter-relationship of *karman*, *prakṛti*, and *Brahman* may be taken further. It must be admitted that, as well as Sāṃkhya, Rāmānuja also shows slight ambiguity on the question of the priority of the two 'creative' factors *karman* and the action of *Brahman*. *Brahman* uses *Prakṛti* as the vehicle of *karmic* influence. Thus *Prakṛti* is called "the object of fruition,"⁶⁷ and is eternal. *Karman* too is referred to as "beginningless." So which is responsible for creation, *Brahman* or *Karman*?

There is no chronological answer, but there is an ontological one, for *karman's* relation to *Brahman* corresponds exactly to *Prakṛti's* relation to *Brahman*. Although *Prakṛti* is eternal it is totally dependent upon *Brahman*. Under this ultimate supervision of *Brahman*, both exist for the sake of the souls. The essential difference between *karman* and *prakṛti* is that the former exists only as a consequence of the soul's action (even though no temporal origin can be assigned to it), while *Prakṛti* exists in "inseparable relation" to *Brahman*, as part of the whole, or attribute to its substance, or body to soul, etc.

Kumarappa⁶⁸ sees the manner in which Rāmānuja attempted "to make clear the exact relation in which the perfect *Brahman* stands to the deeds of the souls," as an important contribution to the development of Indian thought. "This could not satisfactorily be done by earlier philosophers who neither consistently upheld the perfect nature of *Brahman* nor fully recognised the individuality of the soul; and without making clear the relation of *Brahman* to the deeds which explain the evils of *samsāra*, it is obviously impossible with any success to

maintain, as Rāmānuja does, that *Brahman* is not responsible for the evils of *samsāra*, and that in and through them all the gracious deity is working out the ultimate good of souls." Perhaps there is not such an entire lack of ambiguity as Kumarappa suggests. Lacombe, in discussing the divine purposiveness in creation, takes note of a certain ambiguity, but concludes that "ultimé, la servitude est pour la liberté."⁶⁹ (Ultimately, the bondage of *Karma-samsāra* is in order to achieve liberation).

(14) There is finally⁷⁰ the section which provides a thorough discussion of the *sat-kārya-vāda*, a notion which needs to be examined carefully.

(a) The debate begins with the Sāṃkhya contention that it is impossible to believe in *Brahman* as universal cause, for in that "the world is seen to possess none of the qualities of the Lord, and to have pain for its essence," we must necessarily infer some other cause. In line with the *sat-kārya-vāda* the argument continues: "The general rule is that an effect is non-different in character from its cause; as e.g., pots and bracelets are non-different in character from their material cause—clay and gold. The world cannot, therefore, be the effect of *Brahman* from which it differs in character." Claiming that *Pradhāna* must be inferred as this material cause, Sāṃkhya concludes that like all other means of knowledge, "scripture must come to terms with *tarka*," and "requires to be assisted by *tarka*."

(b) The Vedāntic view *Brahman* as cause is then described as a circular argument. For example, it says that the intelligent *Brahman* is cause as this is scriptural teaching. Therefore although there is no apparent intelligence in *Brahman's* effect, the universe, it must possess this potentially and in non-manifest way. In that there can be both potential and manifest forms of intelligence it can be deduced that scripture teaches the causal character of *Brahman*, and the non-intelligent universe as his effect. But "that the relation of cause and effect should exist between things different in character is just what cannot be proved."⁷¹

(c) The *Purva-pakṣin* then changes track, suggesting that "complete sameness of all attributes"⁷² is not necessary in establishing the cause-effect relation. In fact such a relation "requires some difference." For example the causal lump of clay is no longer a lump when in an effected pot-state. But at least there should be "equality of nature between an effect and a cause, in that sense that those essential characteristics by which the causal substance distinguishes itself from other things persist in its effects also."⁷³ This is just what cannot be shown to be true in the case of *Brahman* and the world.

(d) Rāmānuja's initial reply to this Sāmkhya attack does not seem very impressive.⁷⁴ The counter-claim is made that we do observe instances of where "things of different nature stand to each other in the relation of cause and effect", e. g., worms originating from honey, 'scorpion' from dung, etc.⁷⁵ To this Sāmkhya says that if *Brahman*, the cause, differs thus in nature from the world, his effect, then the effect cannot be said to exist in the cause. This implies *a-sat-kārya*, i. e., "that the world originates from what has no existence."⁷⁶ Naturally, Rāmānuja (following the *Sūtrakāra*) does not agree that this is the implication of his argument. The essence of *sat-kārya* is merely that there is no absolute rule demanding that cause and effect should be of the same nature; it was not asserted that the effect is a thing altogether separate and different from the cause.⁷⁷ with *Brahman* and the world, as for instance with honey and worms, there is an identity of substance which persists despite certain distinctions in characteristics. But, replies Sāmkhya,⁷⁸ as the idea of oneness of substance implies that creation, sustention and reabsorption are all existing within the substantial being of *Brahman* and connected substantially with him, then *Brahman* must be said to "be affected by all the imperfections of its effect; in the same way as all the attributes of the bracelet are (potentially) present in the gold also."

(e) We now move to Sāmkhya's repudiation of Rāmānuja's characteristic solution of the dilemma posed by the concept of *Brahman* as in some sense both cause and effect.

How can this be when the effect has both imperfections and non-intelligence as its characteristics? Rāmānuja claims that it is only because *Brahman*, both in causal and effected state, has the universe of *cit* and *acti* as his body that the imperfections of the effected universe do not touch his essential being or inner self. Against this Sāmkhya argues that a body is made up of the elements,⁷⁹ and through its sense organs experiences "the pleasure and pain retributive of former works." The body-analogy is therefore entirely inappropriate to express this relationship. For the highest self must (if assumed at all) be free from *karman*, sense experience, etc., and thus cannot be said to have a body comprised of *cit* and *acti*. In fact, both these entities as such are incapable of constituting a body at all.

(f) Sāmkhya then goes on⁸⁰ to examine another possible interpretation of the analogy; "nor may it be said that to have a body merely means to be the abode of fruition", even if this should be narrowed down to mean being a vehicle for the enjoyment of pain and pleasure, for this still implies *Brahman's* attachment to *karman*.⁸¹ This is repeated in modified form in II.i.14, where it is said that embodiment implies an "enjoying subject"⁸² not essentially different from any individual soul. For even though it could be conceded that souls are not affected by "the changing states of the body such as childhood, old age, etc., yet (they) experience pleasures and pains caused by the normal and abnormal condition of the matter constituting the body." So Sāmkhya repeats the argument that no theory of an embodied *Brahman* can at the same time maintain the essential distinction of *Brahman* and *jīva*.

(g) Following *Draṇiḍa* again, Rāmānuja replies⁸³ that from "ordinary life" we can take the analogy of a ruler, who causes pleasure and pain to his subjects in so far as they obstruct or carry out his will, yet himself remains undisturbed and serene. But Rāmānuja's more important point is that the *jīva* also does not experience pleasure and pain by virtue of its embodiment, but because of *karman*, which can be distinguished from the presence of the body *per se*. For "the person who has freed himself from the bondage of *karman* and becomes manifest in his true nature is not touched by a shadow of evil while all the

same he has a body."⁸⁴ Though it may appear that he has inadvertently taken up a *jivan-mukti* position, in fact Rāmānuja is probably referring to the *linga-sarira*, the subtle embodiment of the soul even after death. But the distinction between a *karma*-body and a non-*karma* body is clearly upheld, the aim of this defence of the body being to strengthen the application of his analogy to the universe and *Brahman*. So he concludes⁸⁵ "The highest self which is essentially free from all evil, thus has the entire world in its gross and subtle form for its body; but being in no way connected with *karman* it is all the less connected with evil of any kind."

(15) We have yet to be introduced to Rāmānuja's own definition of the relation between body and soul that he envisages as the proper relation between *Brahman* and the universe. "The body of a being is constituted by that, the nature, subsistence and activity of which depend on the will of that being."⁸⁶ Naturally, Sāmkhya is able to produce objections to this definition and its application to *Brahman*.

(a) An injured body, for instance, is said not to be an instrument of the being it embodies. But Rāmānuja claims that such injury merely obstructs; it in no way proves the non-existence of the will's functioning through that body.

(b) When it is suggested that dead body persists as a body even after the soul has left it, Rāmānuja refuses to accept that it is any more than a corpse.

(c) Then if it is said that some texts teach that the Lord has no body, this should be understood to "deny of the self a body due to *karman*."⁸⁷ There are, however, three further though minor objections which he seems to leave unanswered. They are that puppets function in obedience to another's will but are not called bodies; that the nature of an intelligent soul being eternal, does not depend directly on the will of the Lord (and therefore cannot be called part of his body); and that any action is the result of the exercise of will and thus "stands towards (a being) in an exclusive subservient relation",⁸⁸ but is not thereby called a body of that being.

After another declaration that the "imperfections adhering to the body do not affect *Brahman*", which is Rāmānuja's immediate response to the line of objection offered, he then⁸⁹ refers back to the Sāmkhya definitions of body, and suggests rather generally but quite appropriately two ways in which they were inadequate.

(a) Firstly, the word 'body' is more comprehensive in application than those definitions allow (though this would appear to overlook their effort to include puppets and actions within the term). 'Body' can be applied "to things of altogether different make and characteristics."⁹⁰ Thus when used of the Supreme Lord as well as of *karma*-controlled *jīva* there is incongruity.

(b) Secondly, the Sāmkhya definition "do not take in those bodily forms which the Lord assumes according to his wish; nor the bodily forms released souls may assume; for none of these embodiments subserve the fruition of the results of actions." (Nor are they comprised merely of the elements, or the abode of sense-organs, or the instrument of pleasure and pain). His initial definition is therefore reiterated: "Any substance which a sentient soul is capable of completely controlling and supporting for its own purposes, and which stands to the soul in an entirely subordinate relation, is the body of that soul... In this sense then, all sentient and non-sentient beings together constitute the body of the Supreme Person."⁹¹

(16) There remains the debate with the theistic form of Sāmkhya (I. iv. 23f). (a) This tradition acknowledges that *Brahman* is universal cause, but wishes to limit this causal feature to his operative activity, *Brahman* being the "superintending Lord." It is *Prakṛti*, as a distinct though not independent causal principle which is the material cause, "because otherwise, the texts declaring *Brahman* to be the cause of the world would not be fully intelligible." By this is meant that in ordinary experience we always see that operative and material causes are quite distinct (as pots and potters, gold and gold-smiths). Normally, instrumental agencies are also required for the "production of effects."⁹²

(b) As we should expect, Rāmānuja counters this line of argument with the claim that *Prakṛti* is in fact *Brahman*, who is the single operative and material cause, "this view being in harmony with the promissory declaration and the illustrative instances."⁹³ The former is the text "referring to the knowledge of all things through the knowledge of one." The latter that which follows this text by way of illustration of something which shows "the knowledge of the effects as resulting from the knowledge of the cause," e.g., a lump of clay and objects made of clay. For, implies Rāmānuja, unless *Brahman* is material as well as efficient cause he cannot be said to provide this kind of enlightenment on the essential and substantial nature of the universe, "any more than we know the pot when we know the potter...For an effect is not a substance different from its cause, but the cause itself which has passed into a different state."⁹⁴ Consequently, all reference to *Prakṛti* as material principle are actually references to *Brahman* in its causal phase when names and forms were not yet distinguished. For a principle independent of *Brahman* does not exist."⁹⁵

(c) It is this concern for the independence of *Brahman* and its corollary that all else must be substantially dependent on *Brahman*, which underlies his argument as a whole. In fact, when it comes to answering the claim that "on the basis of invariable experience it must be held that one and the same principle cannot be both material and operative cause," he falls back on the transcendent character of *Brahman*, "We simply remark that the highest *Brahman*, which totally differs in nature from all the other beings, which is omnipotent and omniscient, can by itself accomplish everything."⁹⁶ It is in the case of clay and similar materials which are incapable of supervising, and of potters and suchlike agents who are incapable of transforming themselves into various effected state and thus "directly realising their intention," that this invariable rule of experience holds good." Such does not need to be the case with *Brahman*.

(d) The final factor which leads Rāmānuja to reject the above view of *Prakṛti* is his Vedāntic view of *Brahman* as the Inner-Self of all. If *Prakṛti* is a substantially independent entity then *Brahman* cannot have this relationship with it. If

Brahman is to be its self, *Prakṛti* must comprise his body. If all the texts teach that "the world whether in its causal or effected condition has *Brahman* for its self"⁹⁷ then the only possible conclusion is that "the highest *Brahman* (has) the whole aggregate of non-sentient and sentient beings for its body" The idea is re-emphasised⁹⁸ that this body-like relationship does not only apply when the evolutionary process has begun to develop. Even "in a total *pralaya*, non-sentient matter having *Brahman* for its Self continues to exist in a highly subtle condition in the relation of a *prakāra*", and thus in the relation of a body.

CHAPTER IX

RAMANUJA AND NYAYA-VAISESIKA

The term 'Vaiśeṣika' suggests a system fundamentally akin to Viśiṣṭādvaita; a philosophy which takes the *Viśeṣa-viśeṣya* relationship as formative for its understanding of reality. In fact, Viśiṣṭādvaita stands towards Vaiśeṣika in a curiously ambivalent relationship of opposition. This is indicated, though not explicitly, by Hiriyanna¹ in the way he explains Viśiṣṭādvaita so frequently by way of comparison to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika.² By way of a general comparison we can say that in epistemology, ontology and soteriology, there are certain important common features; for example the subject-object relation³ resulting in a realistic outlook; the notions of *dravyas* and their inter-relationship; and the rejection of *jivan-mukti*.⁴

For his realist view point and some points of logic Rāmānuja may partly be dependent upon Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika thought. But more often than not, similar terms and concepts are used with a very dissimilar intent. For example, we find that the *viśeṣa* of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, usually translated 'particularity' bears little resemblance to the *viśeṣaṇa* of Rāmānuja, as understood within the whole system. Another such illustration is the use Rāmānuja makes of analogy *upamāna*, which is virtually though not formally a *pramāṇa*, for him in view of the importance of the *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva*. In point of fact he uses the analogical concept in a manner that contrasts strikingly with Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, for whom *upamāna* constitutes one of the primary sources of valid knowledge. When we come to such glaring contrasts as the respective place of *Īśvara*, the role of *anumāna*, *śruti* and the atoms, and pre-eminently the cause-effect relation, it is clear that even if some of Rāmānuja's concepts were inherited from Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, there was considerable transmutation while being grafted into Viśiṣṭādvaita.^{4a}

At this stage, before we enter into the debates to be found in *S'ri-Bhāṣya*, it may be useful to outline some of the main characteristics of Nyāya-vaiśeṣika. The *viśeṣa* already mentioned is one of six *padārthas* or principle categories that are experienced in perception and identifiable in language. The other *padārthas* are: *dravya* (substance), *guṇa* (quality-not a 'stand' in the Sāmkhya sense), *karman* (movement), *sāmānya* (sameness of class), *samavāya* (inseparable relation of co-inherence between any two entities that are found to stand in such relation, e.g., class and individual, cause and effect, substance and attribute, or thing and place in the statement 'the jar is here'). It is these six *padārthas* that make up the basically pluralistic character of the universe.

Dravya and *guṇa*, however, are further sub-divided. The ten substances classed under *dravya* are of particular interest, especially in that each *dravya* is thought to exist independently, whereas the six *padārthas* exist only in relation to one or other of the *dravyas*. As in Sāmkhya there are the four eternal atomic elements; earth, water, fire and air. *Ākāśa*, the fifth element, is thought of as all-pervading, being the medium by which sound is carried.

Kāla (time) is given an original significance as the sixth *dravya*. It provides past, present and future experience as a kind of continuing substance. In Sāmkhya, time is given no such independent existence, a difference which is no doubt related to their respective view of the cause-effect relation. When effect is thought to exist eternally in the cause, it would be natural to think of time as providing but one of the particular concomitant factors required to bring about the emergence of effect, inherently present in the cause. When however, effect is thought to be related to cause only by virtue of the co-inhering category *samavāya*, the effect being in itself essentially a new thing, then it is natural to postulate a more substantial existence for time as the continuum against which such new factors can be said to emerge. In addition, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika realism accepted the observable experience of time as real, in its epistemology regarded the time-experience as the product of Prakṛti-derived *buddhi* ((*buddhi-nirmāṇa*)).

The seventh *dravya* is *dik* or relative spatial-positioning. *Ātman* is the eighth *dravya*, which although separate in each individual is, along with *ākāśa*, regarded as all-pervading, as in Sāṃkhya. In this Rāmānuja differs from both. For Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika it is *manas*, the ninth *dravya* which is atomic in size, and although in itself is primarily the instrument of memory, also about the *ātman*'s 'psychological' experiences of feeling, willing etc.

As the tenth *dravya*, and functioning mainly to meet a teleological need stands *Īśvara*. It is probable that, as in Sāṃkhya-Yoga, *Īśvara* is introduced in the system's later development just to provide such a teleology for their 'proto-scientific' view of the cosmic process.⁵ For the view that an infinitesimal atom can combine to form a spatially significant entity would obviously create some logical difficulty in this kind of early physical theory. And although a physical solution was attempted on the Vaiśeṣika side of the tradition, the Nyāya tradition used these difficulties (as we shall see) "as the basis for an argument to God's existence."⁶

However, this recourse to divine action is not central to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika case, for in the course of their strongly argued *a-sat-kārya-vāda* it is claimed that there is no need to postulate "any transcendental operation in causal movement, as this can be satisfactorily explained by molecular movement (*pari-spanda*)".⁷ And although cause is said to consist of nothing but "unconditional invariable complements of operative conditions"⁸ nevertheless, certain "general conditions such as relative space *dik*, time (*kāla*), the will of *Īśvara*, karmic destiny (*adṛṣṭa*), are regarded as the common cause of all effects (*sādhāraṇa-kāraṇa*)." In fact, as the role of the Nyāya logicians in the united school became more dominant, so the role of *Īśvara*'s *icchā* takes on greater importance in the inferential arguments.

We shall now turn to the arguments Rāmānuja uses to repudiate this Nyāya concept of *Īśvara* as the object of inference. It is in *S'ri-Bhāṣya* I.i.3⁹ that the debate is to be found, there being two main arguments that Rāmānuja

examines, both assuming that the existence of the Supreme Self can be inferred entirely from empirical considerations.

(1) First¹⁰ it is said that just as we infer from the existence of a living person's body that non-intelligent matter is inhabited and animated by an "intelligent principle",¹¹ so by analogy we can infer the existence of *Īśvara* as a Supreme Self, from the fact of non-sentient matter in the world. Rāmānuja replies that the analogy cannot carry the weight of such inferential argument. His reasons for saying this are:

(a) The soul does not in fact originate the body with which it is associated, though such a causal relationship needs to be proved of the Supreme Self and the material world.

(b) Nor is the body dependent for its support solely upon the "intelligent principle", but upon a variety of persons in *samsāric*-relation to that body. Thus the analogy fails again in this particular.

(c) The coherent functioning of the various parts of a body does not logically require a "presiding intelligent principle", but merely the fact of "a certain combination of parts". On the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika premiss, the *samvāya*-concept provides this cohering factor, so again the *upamāna* in itself is shown to be inadequate as a means of proof.

(d) All animated bodies are characterised by breathing, yet we cannot see any evidence of breathing in "the case of the earth, sea, mountains, etc."

(e) When it is argued that motion (in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika the category '*karman*') requires an animating intelligence by way of explanation, just as intelligence supervises body-motion, Rāmānuja replies that the analogy cannot establish the existence of any one such animating intelligent self in the universe, for it could possibly be inferred that many such intelligent principles exist, there being various forms of motion, requiring masses found within the universe.

(2) The second main argument put forward²¹ by the Naiyāyika is an inference from the "world's being an effected thing, it being a matter of common experience that whatever is

an effect or product, is due to an agent who possesses a knowledge of the material cause, the instrumental cause, the final end, and the person meant to make use of the thing produced,"¹³ this being the case in making of jars and such like.

Rāmānuja claims that even if the universe were thought of as an effect, it cannot be validly inferred from this that the Supreme Person is its originating cause. For if we are searching for a sufficient cause to this material world we apprehend as effect, why not find such a cause in individual souls, who have at least an adequate knowledge of earth, the world's material substance. Their instrumental causes could be sacrifice and suchlike potent actions. Of the 'apūrva', or that potency inherent in sacrifices, it is sufficient to say that souls "have some kind of knowledge" without there necessarily being "direct insight."¹⁴ In just such a similar way potters only have a general knowledge of the "powers inherent in (their) implements." Moreover, as a consequence of "increase in religious merit" we find that souls do acquire more and more extraordinary powers. So it is conceivable that such merit could eventually result in the capacity to produce that "extraordinary effect,"¹⁵ the material world. On this reckoning, we need not infer as universal cause some Supreme Soul "of infinite merit."

(3) Rāmānuja then¹⁶ questions the whole basis of this inferential method of establishing the divine existence, that is, the argument from effect to cause. An effected status can only be ascribed to an entity when it is capable of being produced, and when the causes of such production are properly known. Otherwise its effected state is not verifiable. And even should this effect-state be presupposed, the fact is that the only causal agents of which we have knowledge, and therefore about which we can validly argue on the basis of perception and subsequent inference, are agents "possessing material bodies, using implements, not endowed with the power of a Supreme Lord."¹⁷

In brief, we can only prove by inference such causes as are in every way unlike the Lord. Nyāya attempts to prove his

existence as universal cause on a basis of perception and inference which is not properly applicable to his being. Rāmānuja goes on to acknowledge the validity of inferential argument in its proper place, but claims that when the subject of the inference has a character not subject to the processes of normal empirical experience and the inferential method, then the attempt is no longer valid.

(4) The Nyāya-vādin persists¹⁸ with his case, however, and rather forcibly too. Still maintaining that by virtue of its being comprised of parts the universe must be reckoned an effect, he says that "the knowledge and power of the cause must be inferred in accordance with the nature of the effect."¹⁹ Even when an effect such a royal palace is perceived for the first time, the observer is able to infer what is "the architect's manifold knowledge and skill. Analogously, when a living body and the world have once been recognised to be effects, we infer as their maker some intelligent being, possessing direct insight into their nature and the skill to construct them." As the existence of cause follows invariably from the acknowledgement of an effect so too the particular character of that cause. And the argument suggested by Rāmānuja that all known causal agents possess the limitations of their particular causal function shows "ignorance of the nature of the inferential process."²⁰ For what is proved concerning the cause is merely that it possesses "just so much power and knowledge...as is requisite for the production of the effect", but in no way implies any lack of other qualities—"for such incapability and ignorance do not stand towards that effect in any causal relation."²¹

(5) On the question of the instrumentality of bodies on the part of those causal agents known to us by experience, the Nyāya-vādin replies²² that volitional action can take place quite apart from association with a body, the cause of volition being in fact the *manas* (internal organ), which is permanently present in the soul and is in no way dependent on a body. So the Nyāya-vādin concludes²³ that inference directly leads us to the theory that there is a supreme intelligent agent, called the Lord... (who) is without a body, and through his mere volition bring about the infinite expanse of this entire

universe so variously and wonderfully planned." Like the Sāmkhya-Yoga discussed in the previous chapter, Nyāya rejects the notion of a single material and efficient cause, but in Nyāya the Vaiśeṣikan atomic elements take the place of Prakṛti in Sāmkhya.

(6) Rāmānuja winds up the debate²⁴ with four arguments, only two of which have not been brought out previously.

(a) First he says that assuming the universe to be an effect, no proof can be adduced to show that everything was "created at one time by one creator",²⁵ which he claims, is precisely what is required on the basis of Nyāya-vādin's effect-cause analogy. For the mere fact of all the material world being of an effected nature does not preclude the possibility of its being a number of effects, and indeed this is just what is suggested by its variety. And this possibility would, by analogy with the normal processes of production presuppose either successive causal acts, or a variety of producers. Here follows further mention of the possibility that souls of great merit may be such world-producers.

(b) This leads Rāmānuja to point out again what is the essential flaw in any such cosmological argument for "the agency of one intelligent being."²⁶ We cannot infer the creator's existence on the basis of our observation of cause-effect relations within the cosmic process. He has three distinct though mutually related objections:

(i) The weakness of the argument is that "the proving reason (i. e., the nature of the effect on the basis of which the inference must be drawn) is not invariably connected with what it is desired to prove."²⁷ In other words, that such a cause-effect relation does exist is precisely the object of the exercise even though wherever effect exists in other empirical experience, its relation to its cause is so "invariable" as not to be requiring the kind of specific and separate proof needed in the case of the universe-Lord relationship. Thus, that the evidence supplied in this relationship is of a kind different from normal observable cause-effect relations, itself disproves the validity of the argument.

(ii) A further connected problem for Rāmānuja is that of "qualities not met with in experience being attributed to the subject about which something has to be proved."²⁸ Here he shows the anomaly of attempting to infer from what is perceivable (viz., the material universe as an effect) a cause the like of which has never before been the subject of experience in cause-effect relations. Yet the basis of the inferential method is just such empirical cause-effect relations. But how can that which is beyond observable experience be established on the basis of a process of reasoning that, on its own premises, operates within the sphere of the observable?

(iii) The third point is again a slight variation of the first two, and is a repeat of (a) above. He complains of "the proving collateral instances (i.e., potters and such like known producers of effects) being destitute of what has to be proved; for experience does not exhibit to us one agent capable of producing everything."²⁹

(c) Then follows a rather different kind of objection, making more use of certain traditional metaphysical doctrines. All effected things, says Rāmānuja, are found inevitably to be connected with various levels of psychological experience—pleasure, pain etc. These in turn are the direct consequence of those elemental constituents of matter, *sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas*, the proportions of which are, in turn, determined by *karman* operating through the changes experienced by the 'internal organ' of person. "Thus in order to account for the origination of different effects, we must necessarily assume the connection of an intelligent agent with *karman*, whereby alone he can become the cause of effects." This is equally the case even should it be said that the agent originates the effects merely by his volitional power. For the will, "as being specialised by its particular object, must be based on *sattva* and so on..."³⁰ In effect, this argument places the logic of (b) above within the context of a more traditionally metaphysical system. You cannot infer a Supreme cause from outside the karmic process if you are arguing on the basis of a cause-effect logic acknowledged to be within this karmic process.

(d) Finally Rāmaṇuja returns again to the question of the character's body. "Does the Lord produce the effects with his body or apart from his body? Not the latter; for we do not observe causal agency on the part of any bodiless being" (even the "internal organ" being intrinsically body-connected). Nor the former; "for in that case the Lord's body would either be permanent or non-permanent." But this would imply on the one hand that a thing made of parts, such as is a body, is eternal, in which case the world also would be eternal and in no need of the Lord-inference. If, on the other hand, this body of the Lord is said to be non-permanent there is then the problem of finding its cause. For again, bodiless beings are not known to produce things, even their own bodies. An even greater difficulty would result from postulating the Lord's embodiment by some other being's body, this then making logically necessary the origination of an infinite succession of bodies.

This body-question is also related to that of the effort³¹ required of the Lord in creation. If he is without a body he cannot in any case engage in productive effort. But if it is claimed he does not engage in effort, then in any case there can be no thought of an effect, for again there can be no production without effort. Should it be said in answer to this that this causal agent's "activity consists in mere desire", we arrive back at the position objected to in (b) above.

(7) So Rāmaṇuja concludes: Thus the inference of a creative Lord which claims to be in agreement with observation is refuted by reasoning which itself is in agreement with observation,³² and we hence conclude that scripture is the only source of knowledge with regard to the supreme soul that is the Lord of all and constitutes the highest *Brahman*. What scripture tells us of is a being which (is) totally different in character from whatever is cognised by the other means of knowledge."³³

(8) Long before Rāmaṇuja, objections to the Nyāya arguments had been put forward by Jainas Mīmāṃsakas and others.³⁴ But it appears that Rāmaṇuja makes substantial use of only one of Jaina's numerous objections, viz., that in experience production invariably requires a body. Sankara too repudiated the

inferential method of establishing the universal cause, though in general it takes a more significant place in his system than in Rāmaṇuja's. Sankara allows that inference "being an instrument of right knowledge in so far as it does not contradict the Vedānta texts is not to be excluded as a means of confirming the meaning ascertained."³⁵ Because of his view of Īśvara as lower-Brahman, this gives room to the attempt to establish the existence of Īśvara as universal cause once revealed in scripture. But regarding *Para-Brahman* he claims that as "*Brahman* is not an object of the senses, it has no connection with those other means of knowledge. If *Brahman* were an object of the senses, we might perceive that the world is connected with *Brahman* as its effect; but as the effect only (i.e., the world) is perceived, it is impossible to decide (through perception) whether it is connected with *Brahman* or something else."³⁶

In view of Sankara's notion of *Brahman* as pure subject, such a contradiction of the Nyāya use of inference would be expected. But it could be assumed that Rāmaṇuja, who gives much more weight to empirical perception in his epistemology, and is obviously more realistic in his ontology, would show a degree of sympathy towards the Nyāya position which by his time had become a thoroughly theistic system.³⁷ In fact it is Rāmaṇuja's objections which are the more sustained and subtle. So severe is his rejection of the Nyāya argument from the effected character of the universe, that it could be assumed Rāmaṇuja does not even accept this basic premiss in any sense. But we have seen how he repeatedly asserts that *Brahman* is material and efficient cause of the world of *cit-acit* when in its 'sthūla'-condition as his effect. Why does this basic doctrine about *Brahman* and the universe, which implies that a kind of unbroken continuity exists between *Brahman*-cause and universe-effect, not incline Rāmaṇuja to accept the Nyāya argument about the existence of a cause from observation and experience of the characteristics of this effect? To be more specific, why does Rāmaṇuja argue so successfully against the inferential position drawn from the body analogy? In view of his own extensive use of the *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva*, is he not refusing to allow a possible further application of this *bhāva*

merely for the sake of the limited advantages of polemic victory?

(9) This possible incongruity in Rāmānuja's position may be answered in three ways.

(a) The body-soul analogy carries a very different meaning in the two systems. Nyāya argues from the fact of an inanimate material world, attempting to explain it on the analogy of a material body animated by a soul. Rāmānuja uses the analogy in a more inclusive sense, claiming that all else but the essential Brahman-self comprises this body, and in particular the souls. As we noted in the previous chapter, when debating with Sāṃkhya (in the *adhikaraṇas* immediately following this passage)³⁸ Rāmānuja refused to accept as a definition of the body that which is comprised by "an aggregate of earth and the other elements", for it is not this kind of natural *prākṛta*, *karman*-determined body that the supreme Self assumes.

(b) Although Rāmānuja's eventual definition involves, as we noted, a relationship between body and soul in which the soul controls and uses its body, the more usual context in which Rāmānuja falls back on this analogy is that of the *substantial* relationship between *Brahman* and *cit-acit*. The soul obviously does not "cause" the body, except indirectly through its accumulated *karma phala*. But the analogy does indicate the relationship of determining substance and hence the substantial continuity on the basis of which the one can become the serviceable instrument of the other. Nyāya, on the other hand, is searching for a causal agent sufficient to explain that which is observable in the material universe. For Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, there are other and quite adequate causal *dravyas* or substances.

(c) The analogical method takes very different form in the two systems, springing from their entirely dissimilar views of the Supreme Person. For it is this theological and therefore ontological difference which determines the difference in their respective views on the *pramāṇas*, rather than the reverse. Nyāya does, of course, accept *śabda*, but it is virtually subordinate to *pratyakṣa anumāna*.³⁹

(10) At one point in the debate⁴⁰ what Rāmānuja argues against is that the Supreme Person would need a body to operate with, in so far as this makes the Lord subject to inferential treatment on the basis of a normal manufacturing analogy, such as that of the potter. In many other passages Rāmānuja himself makes use of these and similar analogies. But the existence and character of the *Brahman* he envisages is never made *dependent* on the inferential proof resulting from the use of such analogy. Analogy rather illustrates that which is already a given fact; the revealed fact of the existence and nature of *Brahman* being capable of elucidation from the contingent facts of the observable universe. Although Śaṅkara's featureless pure-Being is rejected, Rāmānuja too is equally concerned to preserve the transcendence of *Brahman*. He cannot be reduced to an object of inference, dependent for his very existence upon observable phenomena like any other object. His given character as perfect Supreme Self, the transcendent substantial and operative cause, precludes such treatment. Here again it may be permissible to contract *Brahman* seen as the object of *anumāna*, as in Nyāya, and as the object of *upāsana* as in Viśiṣṭādvaita. And even though Rāmānuja interprets this in the sense of adoring meditation of the perfection of *Brahman*, he never loses the Vedāntic view of *Brahman* also as the subject.

(11) Another important debate is that with Kaṇāda⁴¹ in the extensive *Ārambhana-adhikaraṇa*. II. i. 15-20.⁴² This concerns the nature of the relation of cause and effect, and it should be noted:

(a) That there is here no overt discussion of the role of Īśvara, there being probably no place for such being in early Vaiśeṣika. Though when the debate centres around the "agent of activity", this presumably does refer by implication to Īśvara as he emerges in later Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika.

(b) That some two thirds of this *adhikaraṇa* comprises a debate between Vaiśeṣika (referred to as *Dvaita*) and *Advaita*, on the claim by *Advaita* that cause and effect are identical in that pure-*Brahman* as the cause is alone real and permanent.

As therefore the effect is unreal it cannot be said to be substantially different from the cause. As others have pointed out⁴³ this is not a *sat-kārya* theory at all, but *sat-karāṇa*.

(c) Seven reasons are adduced⁴⁴ by Vaiśeṣika as to why "it is in no way possible that the effect should be non-different from the cause." (i) They are the "objects of different ideas." (ii) They are indicated by different words. (iii) They function to different effect. (iv) They exist in different moments of time, (v) They possess difference of form." (vi) They are numerically different ("threads are many, the piece of cloth is only one.") (vii) "If the effect were nothing but the cause, what could be effected by the activity of the agent?"⁴⁵

(d) In view of this last and rather weighty point a different view of the cause-effect relation is considered. The effect is postulated as permanently *existing* in the cause, but requiring "the activity of the agent" to help its existence as a specific effect. But it is argued (by the Vaiśeṣika, against the hypothesis suggested in answer to his point) that this would necessitate the *perpetual* help of the agent, resulting in the situation where "everything would exist always", and no distinction would pertain between the eternal and the non-eternal.

(e) The position is said to be in no way improved by suggesting *manifestation*⁴⁶ as the proper distinction between effect and its causal state. For although this avoids the charge of an ineffective agent, it still does not adequately avoid the dilemma of the eternal and the non-eternal being without distinction. For if this manifest state, having contingent existence itself, requires another manifestation to account for it, then we are "driven into a regressus in infinitum" (A logical objection which in turn is directed by Rāmānuja himself against more than one aspect of the Vaiśeṣika position, e.g., the *samavāya*). But should it be said that this manifest-effect state is independent of further manifest-states, then it must be eternal and as such should be eternally perceivable, thus negating its claim to be a manifestation at all. If to avoid this dilemma, it

is said that the manifestation *originates*, then, says the Vaiśeṣika you have returned to our *a-sat-kārya*-position.

(f) After further discussion along the lines that manifesting agents such as lamps do not manifest only particular objects (the manifestation view thus entailing the consequence that causes acting to manifest their effects would at the same time bring into this manifest-effect-state all kinds of other effects also) the conclusion is reached that "the activity of the agent has a purpose in so far only as it is the cause of the origination of an effect which previously did *not* exist."⁴⁷

(g) In response to this, Rāmānuja contends that in this theory too the activity of the agent is equally ineffective, for "if the effect has no existence before it is originated, the activity of the agent must be supposed to operate elsewhere than on the effect." As this assumes that there are no limits to the agent's object of operation then his activity relating to one particular cause (e.g., threads) could in fact result in any possible effect (e.g., waterpots).

(h) No, replies the Vaiśeṣika, it is the inherent potentiality⁴⁸ of particular causes which is the determining factor, this being quite distinct from the effect and brought out only when the agent's activity is applied to the (substantial) cause.

(12) Rāmānuja's own exposition⁴⁹ of the cause effect relationship begins with an assertion of "the non-difference of the world from *Brahman*, the highest cause,"⁵⁰ and thus the "non-difference of the effect from the cause." This identity is indicated in the Chāndogya text⁵¹ to which the *Sūtra*⁵² refers when it speaks of "what begins with the word *ārambhana*."

(a) First the traditional claim is made that clay products can be known by the knowledge of their clay substance. In line with this basic Vedāntic notion a reply is then made to the Vaiśeṣika objections, (i) (ii), (iii) above, to *sat-kārya-vāda*—"one and the same substance gives occasion for different *ideas* and *words* only as it assumes different configurations."⁵³ Thus 'Devadatta' also, as he passes through various stages in life is seen to become the "object of different ideas and terms." The

same is true of the different functions of any one substance as it happens to be "in this or that state," and each function depends upon "the activity of an agent." So Rāmānuja claims both the substantial continuity of cause and effect (*Brahman* as material cause providing this continuity), and also the necessity of the causal "agent" (the purposeful will of *Brahman* determining the particular forms and functions assumed by the causal substance in its effected state). In this way Rāmānuja is able to dispose of all the initial objections put forward by the Vaiśeṣika to the idea of the unity of cause and effect.

(b) Then comes the important question of the origination of that which is thought already to exist, which according to Vaiśeṣika, is a self contradiction. But for Rāmānuja, here contradicting a basic axiom of Advaita,⁵⁴ "it is only the real that originates." Advaita says that origination of becoming is less than pure being. If it has an origin, it is contingent and dependent and so is not true *sat*.

(c) Rāmānuja elucidates his reversal of this axiom as follows: to say that a substance existing as cause cannot become an effected state without losing its causal substantiality is to betray ignorance of the "true nature of origination and destruction." For "a substance enters into different states in succession; what passes away is the substance in its previous states, what originates is the substance in its subsequent states. As thus the substance in all its states has being, there is nothing irrational in the *sat-kārya* theory."

(d) when it is suggested that such a notion of originating states is essentially *a-sat-kārya-vāda*, Rāmānuja replies that if an *a-sat-kārya vādin* thinks that "the origination of the effect does not itself originate", then his theory is in fact *sat-kārya*. If he should claim that it does so originate, then he has to go on to postulate a further origination of that origination and so on *ad-infinitum*. None of these difficulties arise when it is held that "states are incapable of being apprehended and of acting apart from that (substance, i.e., *Brahman*) of which they are states."

(e) When *Brahman* is thought of as this causal substance, differentiating itself into "a world consisting of manifold

things,"⁵⁵ the inevitable problem of such a being's perfection reappears. It is by recourse again to his soul-body analogy ("proved by the *antaryāmin-br. hmaṇa* and similar texts") that Rāmānuja seeks to avoid what could be thought of as a pantheistic dilemma. And it is with a final cosmological statement that the debate is concluded.

First he carefully distinguishes the *jīva*-presence in the universe from the *Brahman*-pervasion of the universe⁵⁶. Then he goes on to say that "*Brahman* is denoted by the term 'world' in so far only as it (i.e., *Brahman*) has non-sentient and sentient beings for its body...All change and imperfection belongs only to the things constituting *Brahman's* body, and *Brahman* itself is thus proved to be free from all imperfection, a treasure as it were of all imaginable holy qualities."⁵⁷ Finally he explains how this soul-body analogy relates up with the cause-effect topic of the preceding debate. This body of *Brahman* "is sometimes constituted by sentient and non-sentient beings in their subtle state (incapable of being designated as apart from *Brahman*). At other times the body of *Brahman* is constituted by *cit-acit* in gross, manifest state...*Brahman* is then in its 'effected' state."

(13) Two further points are made against Vaiśeṣika in the succeeding Sūtras. The first concerns the use of different terms to indicate different states of the same substance, and can be omitted here. The second concerns the meaning of such texts as e. g., Chāndogya III.19.1, "non-being (*asat*) only was this in the beginning."⁵⁸ Is this not a categorical denial of the effect's existence in the causal-state of "the beginning"? Rāmānuja replies that to speak of "non-being only" is merely a way of describing the effect's different constitution, its special qualities at that earlier stage. For both existence and its opposite, non-existence, are qualities attributable to any object, for "quality of existence *sat* is constituted by *nāma-rūpa*"⁵⁹ while the quality of non-existence consists in the subtle state." For the text itself says that this 'Non-existent' formed the resolve, "May I be", and such self-projection is impossible of "absolute non-existence." In any case, reason also points to the attributive character of existence and non-existence. For when clay possesses a certain form or quality, we say "a jar exists."

When it does not possess this jar-quality we say "the jar does not exist." In other words the only describable kind of non-existence is the non-existence of something.

To clinch the matter the Sūtras⁶⁰ provide two illustrations of the process by which *Brahman* passes from cause to effect; viz., threads are joined to become a piece of cloth, and air undergoes modifications in the body, in both cases thus "acquiring a new name a new form, and new functions."⁶¹ This view of non-existence on Rāmānuja's part, seeing it as contingent upon and merely attributive to a persisting, existent substance, contrasts with the view of non-existence to be found in other systems. And it is entirely consistent with his basic position that the being of *Brahman* alone provides the substantial continuum for all existence. Either to ascribe a negative form of existence to anything which is outside this substantial Being, or to ascribe non-reality and hence non-existence to anything which in normal experience is regarded as within this substantial being, is to belittle the being of the supreme Person.⁶²

(14) Rāmānuja also rejects the Vaiśeṣika doctrine of atomic-origination: "The theory of the world originating from atoms through binary compounds is untenable...for if the atoms possessed no distinction of parts (and hence filled no space) a group of even a thousand atoms would not differ in extension from a single atom, and the different kinds of extension...would never emerge." Should it be said that the atoms have an infinity of parts, then each entity resulting from the combination of atoms must be said to have an identical infinity of parts, in which case the difference of extension in various things (e.g., mustard seed and mountain) becomes inexplicable.⁶³ As we noted earlier in the chapter, the action of Īśvara was later postulated by Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika as one such necessary explanation of the emergent, parts-comprised entities of the cosmic process.

(15) But a more fundamental question is posed by "the primary notion of the atoms which are the cause of the origination of the entire world."⁶⁴ For Vaiśeṣika assumes that *adr̥ṣṭa*, the unseen karmic principle, causes this initial movement of the

atoms. Rāmānuja, however, sees a problem of location (*āśraya*) here (this objection being raised also in the case of Sankara's notion of *avidyā*). For Rāmānuja, every category must have its proper reference to the total continuum. (If it fails to relate as an accessory or attributive part, it cannot be said to have any part). Does this *adr̥ṣṭa* reside in the atoms themselves, or in the souls? In that it originates from the souls' actions it cannot be said to reside in the elemental atoms. And even if it did, the consequence would be a continually produced world (the *adr̥ṣṭa* forming "an eternal stream"). As we have already seen, this was quite inadmissible to Rāmānuja, presumably because it precluded the possibility of the *pralaya*-stage (a basic Vedāntic doctrine), which was important to Rāmānuja both as a soteriological concept and also perhaps as signifying that the Supreme Person was essentially independent of any creative action by necessity. If he is able to bring about the dissolution of created forms from time to time, we may presume that there is a certain freedom of volition when he resumes creative activity.

To escape this dilemma Vaiśeṣika postulates⁶⁵ the maturing of each *adr̥ṣṭa* in its due time, whether in the same existence, a later existence, or even in some subsequent *kalpa*. This too fails to satisfy Rāmānuja, there still being no intrinsic explanation of world origination. For the latter would require "the uniform maturation of one and the same moment of time" of all these separately formed and separately existing *adr̥ṣṭas*. When Vaiśeṣika resorts eventually⁶⁶ to the will of Īśvara, who is said to impart the necessary capacity to the *adr̥ṣṭas*, Rāmānuja's final thrust is that "by mere inference the existence of a Lord cannot be proved."

(16) Finally, there is the Vaiśeṣika doctrine of *samavāya*, or the idea of co-inherence of separate entities such as is seen in the relation of substance to attribute, cause to effect, etc., and without which there cannot be said to be any such inter-relationship. Thus the relationship itself is said to form a third entity, or *padārtha*.

(a) The primary argument⁶⁷ against this notion of an external category of relationship is that of causing another *regressus in infinitum*. In other words, if a relationship

requires some further external category to account for it, then the relationship between the relationship (the third category) and the two *relata* likewise will require another category to account for it, and so on.

(b) But Rāmānuja here introduces a further important objection. The *relata* which Vaiśeṣika attempts thus to account for, such as e.g., *jāti* and *vyakti* are in fact "inseparably connected."⁶⁸ That is, even though there may be a principal-subordinate relationship, neither can be known apart from the other. If this invariable relationship is thought to require explanation by a third category like *samavāya*, then the *samavāya* will also be an inseparable connection and will likewise require a further explanatory reason. To say simply that such connection is "the essential nature" or the *samavāya* (which as such does not require any further reason) would make *jāti*, *vyakti*, etc., possess the same "essential nature", and the *samavāya* explanation would then become for them also equally unnecessary.⁶⁹

(c) Hiriyanṇa suggests⁷⁰ that the only difference between *aprthak-siddhi* and the *samavāya* doctrine it is intended to replace is that "while *samavāya* tries to separate what are supposed to be distinct, *aprthak-siddhi* tries to separate what are supposed to be one. Both alike represent efforts to seek what it is not possible to have, viz., a half way house between inclusion and exclusion."

In his opposition to Advaita it is true that Rāmānuja intends the notion of inseparability to mean 'inseparable but not identical.' But the idea can be, and was, used with equal force against Vaiśeṣika's pluralism, which Rāmānuja pointedly refers to as 'Dvaita.' In this context therefore it means, 'not the external connection of a further category, but intrinsic inseparability'. To say that this is only a superficial difference, or to say that both are logically impossible positions is neither helpful nor valid. It is perhaps not as easy to present an irresistible logic for the organically, internally-relational character of reality as it may be either for a simple non-dualism or a pluralism of some kind. But it is certainly not an intrinsically illogical position.

(d) What is more significant from our point of view is the entirely consistent manner in which Rāmānuja has made his doctrine of the Supreme Person the point of reference in his debate with these diverse systems. To maintain such consistent theism on all sides appears to have led him inexorably to his *pan-en-theistic* position, styled *viśiṣṭa-advaita*, and characterised at its centre by the comprehensive *śarīra-śarīri*-analogy.

CHAPTER X

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE
SELF-BODY ANALOGY

There are at least twelve ideas, distinct though inter-related, that are signified by Rāmānuja in his use of the self-body analogy. Most of them have been brought out at some point in the preceding discussion. In this concluding chapter it may be useful to review these ideas, with a brief discussion of their more significant aspects.

(1) The self-body analogy indicates the *essential distinction between God and his universe*. *Brahman*, as described in innumerable passages throughout Rāmānuja's writings, is the supremely adorable, infinitely good, personal Being of theistic experience. He is not the impersonal Absolute, either of sheer transcendental intuition, or of speculative logic. For such an Absolute can be identified with the transcendent self within; then God is no longer the God of worship. Carman¹ convincingly suggests that supremacy (*paratva*) and accessibility (*saulabhya*) are the two most prominent characteristics, not only of later Viśiṣṭādvaita, but of Rāmānuja's theology also, even though he uses the actual terms very little. Both these concepts Rāmānuja elucidates with the help of the self-body analogy. In this section we are concerned only with the *paratva* aspect of *Brahman*, his otherness of essential nature.

In the debate with Advaita the analogy is used most frequently to indicate the non-identical relationship of *Brahman* and *ātman*. To be faithful to Vedāntic sources it was necessary for Rāmānuja to take seriously such Mahāvakyas as 'Tat-tvam-asi' and 'Aham-brahma-asmi.' Obviously some kind of identity (*tādātmyā*) is intended in these passages. Rāmānuja uses the two technical terms *sāmānādhikaraṇya* and *prakāra*, as we noted, to explain this *tādātmyā*. And both these terms are interpreted by means of the self-body analogy.

(a) The identity, says Rāmānuja, is one of *sāmānādhikaraṇya*, which he takes to mean: "the application to one object of words with differing functions."³ Thus "since all spiritual and non-spiritual entities constitute *Brahman*'s body, *Brahman* being in this way embodied and modified by all, is denoted by all words. Hence the *sāmānādhikaraṇya* construction *tat-tvam* denotes *Brahman* as 'the One who is modified by the individual soul inasmuch as this soul constitutes his body.' " "It follows that both words *tat* and *tvam*...denote that one *Brahman*. The word *tat* refers to *Brahman* as the One who is the cause of the world, the bode of all perfections, the immaculate and untransmutable One; whereas *tvam* refers to that same *Brahman* under the aspect of inner Ruler of the individual soul as being modified by the embodied soul."³

(b) The meaning of the term *prakāra* has already been discussed at some length.⁴ (To avoid confusion with the kind of modification effected in *pariṇāma*, 'type' or 'prototype' and 'typified' or 'ectype' was suggested as a translation for *prakārin* and *prakāra*. This term also is used to explain what kind of *tādātmyā* is intended between *Brahman* and *ātman*; and its meaning too is determined by the self-body analogy.

The context in which Rāmānuja expounds this concept in *Srī-Bāṣya*⁵ is this: is it possible for one substantial entity to be predicated of another, and yet for one to be entirely dependent upon the other for its very being? Where do we find this kind of *prakāra-prakārin* identity? Rāmānuja answers that it is found precisely in the relationship of body to its self. He puts it in this way: "For the body stands towards the embodied soul in the relation of *prakāra*; when a thing is apprehended under the form 'this is such,' the element apprehended as 'such' is what constitutes a *prakāra*." He goes on to suggest a series of links leading from such predication of identity, through the determinative body-self relationship, up to the Highest Self of which the individual self is a *prakāra*. "It follows that all these words extend in their signification up to the Highest Self." This means that words 'identifying' the Highest Self do so in a real and primary sense, not in an indirect *lakṣaṇā* sense. Rāmānuja's analogical

predication is thus quite different from Sankara's *lakṣaṇā*-predication,⁶ just as *tādātmya* is so differently interpreted. In effect Rāmānuja argues that it is just because *God is essentially distinct* from all other entities, by virtue of their dependence on His Being, that predications of identity are possible.

Although at times the analogy seems to be applied with literal realism, in general we find that the God-universe difference is not *exactly* that found between soul and body. But sufficient similarity is suggested in the analogy to make the logical description possible. The possible ambiguity in Rāmānuja's use of the term '*jīva*', and whether he means the empirical ego or the unchangeable, transcendent self, does not appreciably affect the significance of the analogy in this issue at least. Even the empirical ego which is deluded by the *dehā-ātma-bhrama*, or which wrongly identifies itself with its body, is still experiencing some kind of body-transcendence, in a manner similar to the otherness of God and universe.

(2) The self-body analogy also indicates the *inseparable relationship* (*apr̥thak-siddhi-sambandhana*) between God and the universe. The universal organic complex of the *tattva-traya*s, God-souls-nature, is characterised by that kind of inner-inseparability found between self and body in human experience. Rāmānuja's concern to protect the transcendent perfection of the Supreme Being was second to none. But he was quite unable to admit this transcendence to be the ineffable otherness of pure Subject, of which *tat* and *sat* alone can be predicated directly, and which alone comprises absolute reality.

To the Advaitin this *tattva-traya* concept, just as the *śarīra-śarīri*-complex, imperils the *akhandā* nature of *Brahman* or the pure, undivided simplicity of absolute reality. Various writers have for this reason criticised the Viśiṣṭādvaita view of God as *aṃśin* and the universe as *aṃśa*. But '*aṃśa*' does not here mean a quantitative part (*khaṇḍa*). It is used rather to indicate the participation of the universe in the Infinite Being of God. There is a real 'communication'⁷ between Infinite Lord and his finite creation in a way similar to that of self and body. *Brahman* not qualitatively isolated from, or discontinuous with,

the relativities of the creature. However, this participation is not by virtue of innate similarity' but rather by virtue of the imparted and infused presence of *Brahman* in the creature. In *Vedārtha-Samgraha*^{7a} Rāmānuja clearly proclaims the continuing 'uniformity' and 'oneness' of God in his 'infinite and immeasurable diversity.' "It is not proper to infer that *Brahman* is similar to any other being in anything." Carman⁸ suggests that in Rāmānuja's terminology *svatūpa* is his essential Being, God in himself; God's *svabhāva* is his nature in so far as he relates himself to his creation. But while it is quite possible to speak of God's unrelated essence in this way, in fact God's nature is such that he eternally relates himself inseparably with his creation; his essential perfect Being, thus impinges upon finite self 'includes' the body.

(3) The self-body analogy also indicates the *eternal dependence* of the universe on the will of God. Rāmānuja's initial definition of the body in *Śrī-Bhāṣya*⁹ was: "Any substance that an intelligent being is able completely to control (*niyantum*) and support (*dhārayitum*) for his own purposes, and the essential nature of which is entirely subservient (*śeṣatvā*) to that intelligent self..." As with most Vaiṣṇava theology Rāmānuja sees the soul's ignorance of its dependence on God as its most serious *ajñāna*-condition. Only God is *Svatantra*; the soul's eternal liberation is consequent to its recognition and experience of its *paratantra* or dependent nature.

Here again there is diametrical opposition to all these viewpoints which assume that the soul's complete independence alone ensures its *mokṣa*-state. For Rāmānuja, as he puts it in the closing sections of *Vedārtha-samgraha*:¹⁰ "The soul essence is that it is subservient to another." Not only the *jīvas* but the whole universe is subject to the divine will (*icchā*), determining purpose (*sankalpa*) and directing, animating power (*śakti*).

Thus the *apr̥thak-siddhi* relationship is not reciprocal. Rāmānuja even pointed out a defect in the self-body analogy in this respect. In *Gītā-bhāṣya*, commenting on 9.4-5, he acknowledges that there is a kind of mutual dependence between

self and body, in that the soul is dependent on the body for the accomplishment of its purposes. But in the case of God's relation to the universe of *cit-acit*, "I am the supporter of all beings; they are no help at all to me at any time." B. N. K. Sharma's accusation¹¹ of an entirely reciprocal relationship in Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita is not valid, whatever the truth of his claims concerning Madhva, with his radical stress on God as the sole *Svatantra*, governing the universe by sheer will.

(4) The self-body relationship was used by Rāmānuja to elucidate the *causal efficacy* of God in relation to the universe. He took realistically the *sat-kārya* view of this relationship, which posits the potential inherence of the effect in the preceding cause, and consequently an inherent similarity of effect to its cause. We saw in the debate with Naiyāyika that Rāmānuja would accept no attempt to prove the causal efficacy of God by means of the body-analogy, when undertaken on the inadequate basis of inference alone. He even argues that a body is *not* produced by the soul to which it is attached. But we also noted a quite different application of the analogy when removed from the limitations of mere inferential argument. In that *Brahman* is the animating soul of the universe he is able to determine its form that is, whether in subtle, causal state, or whether in manifest, effected state. For the determining will of *Brahman*, the Supreme Self, not only effects the change from *sūkṣma* to *sthūla* condition, even the *sūkṣma*-state is causal in the material sense only. Its existence and its potentiality derive from the essential Being of God.

Rāmānuja's thinking on this issue of causal efficacy was no doubt influenced to some extent by the idea of karmic-potency; the idea that the eternal *jīva* by its actions determines the type of body it is to assume. We noted a little ambiguity in Rāmānuja's teaching concerning the creative role of karma. But it was quite axiomatic for him that the Supreme Self, Creator in both an efficient and an emanatory sense, who himself initiated the karmic process, acts in perfect freedom either from the karmic law, or from any other necessity external to his own nature.

Moreover, to consider this creative action as grounded in a kind of self-body relationship does help to understand it as an act of self-expressive will. This kind of relationship suggests an eternal and substantial continuity between Creator and creation—whereas in theologies of 'more will' radical discontinuity imperils the basis of their 'concurrence.'¹² An externally posited creation is then suggested; creation 'over against' the Creator; and eventually complete freedom from the Creator is claimed.¹³ But when a substantial God-world relationship, akin to the self-body relationship, is presupposed, then the 'mere will' of God can be taken as a sufficiently inclusive cause.¹⁴

Rāmānuja also uses the self-body analogy quite frequently to indicate the *immutable perfection of God's essential Being*. Advaitins such as Ch. Sharma¹⁵ are not persuaded that the analogy can carry the weight of this argument. "If the entire universe...is the real body of God, then God must suffer all the changes and miseries, pains and defects and imperfections of matter and soul, just as the individual suffers pain in his body." If it is said that the soul is not affected by the experience of the self with which it is associated, then "it cannot be identified with the empirical ego and the plurality of souls cannot be maintained." Why Sharma claims that there is no alternative to either many empirical egos, or one 'universal Ātman' is not clear.

In any case Rāmānuja's analogically expressed idea here seems quite plausible. Without holding a radical dualism of mind and body, soul and body or self and body, even empirical experience suggests that there is a constant centre in the person which transcends and thus is, in this sense, independent of the conditions which impinge on that person. Naturally these experiences never remain entirely outward to the person; they all contribute to the material formation of that person. But in normal experience there is always some kind of essential Subject responding to, yet transcending the objective world; experience is not something to which the person is only subjected.^{15a}

In other words, it is not only the presupposition of a pure, eternally unchanging, passive *Puruṣa*, as in Sāṃkhya, that Rāmānuja's analogy holds good as a plausible comparison to the essential independence of the Supreme Self. In fact Rāmānuja, while accepting the idea of a transcendent constant, an atomic-like entity which bears a number of the splendid qualities of the Supreme Self on which it depends, also accepted the reality of the empirical ego. It is this experiencing, self-conscious *jīva* which is destined for eternal bliss in communion with the Supreme Self, and which realises this destiny by means of the real experiences of its pilgrimage as an empirical *jīva*.

Thus, in opposition to Bhedābheda, Rāmānuja says: ^{15b} "The *parināma* we teach is not of such a nature as to ascribe imperfections to the Supreme *Brahman*." He puts this thesis in four ways,¹⁶ two of which we have already discussed:

(a) The distinctive nature of each entity in the composite being of *Brahman*-universe is not lost nor confused in the creative process. "It is impossible for material objects...to be identical in *svarūpa* with *Brahman*, who is flawless, immutable, opposed to everything defiling..." Rāmānuja sums up as follows:¹⁷ "There is no confusing the distinctive *svabhāvas* of material things, finite selves and *Brahman*; they are respectively, being subject to change, being liable to suffering, and possessing a treasure-store of auspicious qualities."

(b) Rāmānuja quite frequently argues¹⁸ that the Lord of all, the Supreme Self, the Inner Ruler "is not touched by the imperfection and mutations of his body", in the same way that the conditions of the material body "do not affect the finite self ensouling that body."

(c) It is *karma*, not embodiment as such, which is the reason for the body's suffering, therefore, God "has not the slightest connection with *karma*" (in essential nature), and as he is the Ruler who initiated *karma*, his form of embodiment does not make him subject to any kind of evil.¹⁹

(d) It is by virtue of his "unsurpassably excellent Lordship" that *Brahman* is able to enter into this condition of

embodiment. Such universal embodiment is therefore but a further means to expressing this Lordship over the material universe and the souls inhabiting it.²⁰

(6) The *inclusive* and *consummative* nature of God's relation to the universe is also brought out by the self-body analogy. As we saw in a previous chapter Rāmānuja uses the analogy specifically to confirm his Gītā-like view of the all-inclusiveness of the Supreme Self. In one definition²¹ of the body he says that it "abides in" the self, being "included by" the self for its own purposes. This does not necessarily contradict his doctrine of the atomic-character of the *jīva*. For the *jīva* extends its potency throughout the body, thus transcending and in a sense gathering into itself the totality of the body's existence.

In spite of his profession of *deha-ātma-bhrama*,²² Rāmānuja was able to claim that "when we refer to a body, we refer simultaneously to the soul, on which the body is entirely dependent and apart from which it has no proper existence. Just because of this intimate relation between body and soul, judgements are possible of the type I am stout, by which a property of the body is predicated of the self." This is Van Buitenen's summary²³ of Rāmānuja's extended passage on this point. Van Buitenen goes on to show that the mahāvākya '*tat-tvam-asi*' should be understood in exactly the same way. '*Tat*' refers to God, the Inner Ruler of the whole self-body complex; '*tvam*' refers to the self, which can also include the body by association. Therefore "just as the body terminates in the soul, so the soul terminates in the inner Soul. Consequently all words which describe the body ultimately refer to the soul, and all words which refer to the soul ultimately refer to God."²⁴

(7) The character of God as *Supreme Person* is brought out explicitly in the self-body analogy. In an earlier chapter there was some discussion of the use in Upaniṣads and Gītā of the names *Ātma* and *Puruṣa* for the divine Being. *Puruṣottama* (or *Parama-Puruṣa*), the Highest Person, was a favourite divine name to Rāmānuja. *Paramātmā* the Supreme Self is used less

often, though interchangeably. The self-body analogy can obviously be applied in a peculiarly apt way when the divine being is thought of macrocosmically²⁵ as the Highest Person in relation to the universe. No doubt it is possible to call this way of thinking 'anthropo-morphism'²⁶ thinking of God in terms of, or in the form of, man. However, unless the *via-negativa* is followed, that is the *neti-neti* method which allows only negative predicates of the Infinite, it is difficult to see how anything at all can be said of that divine Being except by way of comparison with the finite realm. If the Infinite is merely equated with known finite forms, then its infinitude and its transcendence is lost. If all comparison is denied then the reality of the divine-human relationship found in religious experience, as well as the ultimate reality of the finite world, is lost.

Rāmānuja's analogical method is one of superlative attribution, an *ordo eminentiori* in which the qualities attributed to God, though first attributable to finite beings, are said to relate to God's Being in a perfect, unlimited manner. For example, *Śrī-bhāṣya* opens with a description of *Brahman*, the object of Vedāntic enquiry, as "the Supreme Person, who is essentially free from all imperfections and possesses innumerable types of auspicious qualities of unsurpassable excellence. The term 'brahman' is applied to any things which possess the quality of greatness: but primarily denotes that which possesses greatness...in unlimited fulness; and such only is the Lord of all."²⁷

It is in a similar manner that selfhood is attributed to God. In many respects this Selfhood, and its relationship to the created universe, bears a resemblance to the human self's experience of its body. But the comparison is not exhaustive; there are limitations to the way the creature-self transcends the material universe. In the Creator alone the qualities of Selfhood are supereminently, infinitely realised. He is the Supreme Person.

(8) That the universe is *instrumental* to the will of God is also brought out by the self-body analogy. We have already

noted the primary definition the body offered by Rāmānuja:²⁸ "That substance that a spiritual entity can use and support entirely for its own purposes (*svārthe niyantum dhārayitum*) and that in its essence is exclusively subordinate to that entity... (*tat-śeṣatā-eka-svarūpā*). This *śeṣa-śeṣi* relationship is of considerable significance to Rāmānuja. In *Vedārtha-samgraha* he elucidates it thus:²⁹ "The *śeṣa* is that whose essential nature consists solely in being useful to something else by virtue of its intention to contribute some excellence to this other thing, and this other is the *śeṣi*. Thus sacrifice...In the same way, the essential nature of born slaves and other servants is solely that they are beings who have value for their masters (*puruṣa*)... Likewise the essential nature of all entities, eternal and non-eternal...Thus everything is in the state of being subservient (*eśābhūtam*) to the Lord, and He is the master and owner (*śeṣi*) of everything..." Thus *śeṣatva*, according to Rāmānuja's exposition, primarily signifies usefulness, serviceability, instrumentality.

Rāmānuja's definition of the body is remarkable for other features also. It suggests, for instance, that materiality is a potential vehicle of spiritual nature.³⁰ No doubt other systems gave some room for this concept of the usefulness of matter to soul. However, no other system in the Indian tradition was able to give such a positive role to the body in relation to the soul, and hence to the whole universe in relation to the Supreme Self.

Equally significant is the role of the soul itself as an active agent in this relationship, again an idea which distinguishes Rāmānuja from a number of other schools. He argues that the soul is a *kartā*³¹ just because it functions within the body of the highest Self. The power to will certain actions is intrinsic to the soul, but it can carry out such intentions only with the consent (*anumati*) of the "inwardly ruling highest Self." Such *kartṛtva* is permitted only to "those who are resolved to act so as fully to please the highest Person." It is He who is the supreme *Kartā*, just as He is the Supreme Self. But within his all inclusive Agency, there is clearly a responsible role for the individual self. If the emphasis is found more frequently on the soul's

serviceability to the all-determining will of God, nevertheless the soul's *kainkarya*-role is equally important. In response to the grace of the Lord, the soul is destined to be and to function as the Lord's eternal servant.³²

This idea is widened to include the whole universe in the *lilā-vibhūti*³³ concept. The term '*vibhūti*' is used frequently in the commentary on the *Gītā*'s tenth chapter, the *Vibhūti-yoga*. *Vibhūti* is said to mean that which is dependent on the Lord's power of creation and action; it is that which is controlled; through it He pervades the world as its Controller; it indicates that "finite being is related to God as a manifestation of His Lordship or glory."³⁴ But this Lordly activity is described (as in the *Gītā* and *Sūtras*) as divine '*lilā*,' or sheer play. At first glance this could be taken as a mere device to escape the implications of the *karma*-doctrine when applied to divine activity. This point we shall discuss later. Here we may note only that the whole creative process and the souls involved in it are sometimes called God's *lilā-upakaraṇa*, or "instruments of sport," "play-things." A king's son may have a fine plaything; but it will be of no interest to him unless he learns that it is intended for his pleasure. "Likewise the world becomes the object of unsurpassably excellent love to one who recognises that it is ensouled by *Brahman* and is a plaything or instrument of sport to *Brahman*, whose essential nature is unsurpassably excellent bliss."³⁵ The universe, then, is clearly a means for souls to understand and participate in the divine bliss. Moreover although the *Gītā*, *Sūtras* and Rāmānuja disclaim the *prayojana* (beneficial purpose) of the creative act for the Lord, and although a distinction is made between the soul's need of its body to fulfil its purposes, and the Lord's independence of any such need, He does in fact use the universe to manifest his glory (*vaibhava*), and as a means to liberating souls in bondage.³⁶

(9) The self-body analogy thus also has relevance to the question of *divine purpose*. What does Rāmānuja mean when he says³⁷ that although human bodies serve the purposes of their souls, the divine body serves no such *prayojana* to its Self, for the Supreme Self's actions are all merely *lilā*-motivated?

The *lilā* notion is not intended to teach an entirely purposeless creation.³⁸ This is ruled out by Rāmānuja's frequent reference to the eternally realised divine *sankalpa* or determining purpose in relation to creation. Then there are such passages as this³⁹: "What the Lord himself aims at (*svayam-eva prayatate*) is ever to increase happiness to the highest degree, and to this end it is instrumental that he should reprove and reject the intolerable mass of sins which accumulate....." *Prayojana* is not specifically mentioned here. But the idea of personal effort motivated by the need of other selves is clearly present. In other words, because the benefit is not for Himself, and because He is able to act without any kind of constraint, either internal or external, the Lord is a *niṣ-kāma-kartā* and is not implicated in the *karma-samsāra* cycle. He is eternally free.

The discussion in *S'ri-Bhāṣya*⁴⁰ runs as follows: An objection was put to the idea of the Lord as Creator, because such activity implies a motive whereas the Lord must be understood as a perfectly fulfilled Being. That the motive for creation have been kindly concern for the world is suggested by the fact that it is not an altogether happy place. Thus there is a distinction made between motivation in creative action and in redemptive action, the latter being approved in the passage mentioned above. But we should note that even rejection of "kindly concern in creative action is only accepted for the sake of argument. In view of other passages stressing the usefulness of creation to the souls it is difficult to imagine that Rāmānuja would take this point very seriously. However, his own exposition of the *Sūtra* concerned is that "there is no objection to the view that *lilā* only is the motive prompting *Brahman* to the creation sustentation and destruction of this world which is easily fashioned by his mere will."

It is precisely his notion of the inseparable relationship of the Supreme Self to his cosmic body that enables Rāmānuja to avoid some of the logical and metaphysical pitfalls connected with the idea of divine purpose. The most obvious problem here is that it appears to attribute the limitations of finite existence to the Infinite.⁴¹ Purpose implies a temporally determined sequence of dissatisfaction with what is at present,

the intention to achieve some other state (in the future), and the eventual realisation of this intention. Thus the problem of the relation of infinity to time is also raised ^{41a}

But when an internally organic relation of Creator to creation is held, the 'purpose' of the Creator can be understood more in terms of self-expression.⁴² In that his purposes are "eternally fulfilled" he is free from any kind of necessity or constraint, other than his own spontaneously creative nature.⁴³ In that this nature is eternally perfect, then this creativity imposes no kind of limitation upon him. There is no purposed goal external to his own perfections, even though the creation itself involves a form of existence which is less than perfect.

The concept of bliss (*ānanda*) in Rāmānuja's thought is a natural corollary to the *līlā-bhāva*, and the *ātma-sārīra-bhāva*. Both these concepts, *ānanda* and, *līlā* provide his teaching on the supreme will of God with a significant dimension. In a passage⁴⁴ discussing the meaning of *ānanda-maya* Rāmānuja argues (against Sāṃkhya) that it is the Supreme Person who is "the-one-abounding-in-bliss"; that this Person has unique volitional powers; that He alone is the creative Cause of the universe; that He is at cause of bliss in others; and that He enters the universe of created things as their Inner Self. In fact, this last point of the Supreme Self's participation in created being is the determining basis both of his action in creating and in bliss-sharing.

(10) Rāmānuja also uses the self-body analogy to confirm his view of the reality of the universe. However much the protagonists of Sankara may argue that his teaching on *jagat-mithyā* should not be taken to mean that the phenomenal world is an illusion, the fact remains that according to Sankara,⁴⁵ from the point of view of the pure reality of Brahma-realisation, the universe is the superimposed product of *adhyāsa*, and hence is *mithyā*. If all Sankara's teaching on *māyā*, *avidyā*, *aupadhika*, etc. have to be re-interpreted with the qualification that it is only the *Parama-ārthika* viewpoint that makes the world less than real, then we also have to qualify Sankara's every word

concerning the creative and redemptive activity of *Brahman*—it is completely real only from a *Vyāvaharika* point of view.

Fr. De Smet's comparison ⁴⁶ of Thomas Aquinas' doctrine of creation and Sankara's doctrine is a remarkably skilful attempt at academic dialogue. Clearly there are a number of points of similarity. Among other things both begin with the concept of pure Being and its perfect simplicity^{46a}—according to Rāmānuja a doubtful premiss to start from. Both maintain that things Being is the sole and perfectly independent Cause of all that actually exists. But Fr. De Smet completely ignores the 'problematic' aspect of creation in Sankara's writings; that is, the *māyā*-veiling action of *Īśvara*. It is merely claimed, without any discussion, that "this Cause is not the intermediary *Īśvara*."⁴⁷ Apart from thus omitting of important stands in Sankara's system, Fr. De Smet tends to allow a mutual assimilation in bringing the two systems into comparative relationship. Thus Aquinas' ideas are interpreted by the use of Sankara's terminology, and Sankara's ideas by the use of Aquinas' terminology.

For example, in describing Aquinas' concept of causation it is said that "we can only define (causation) by borrowing terms from the realm of finite causation on the basis of analogy. Hence these terms have to be adapted to the unusual function. This adaptation proceeds in three steps: first the step of confused affirmation which corresponds to *adhyāsa* (superimposition): creation is the production of the universe by God; second, the step of purification or negation (*apavāda*): this production is unlike any secular production; third, the step of elevation (*paramārthāpatti*): creation is the entire emanation of the totality of this universe from the pure *Esse*." Of these three stages Fr. De Smet gives a further exposition of the second and third only (*via negativa* and *via affirmativa*). It is, however, the *adhyāsa* comparison in particular which seems least appropriate. Sankara's *adhyāsa* concept presupposes and therefore signifies an ontology and epistemology which are very different from that of Aquinas. For example when the *adhyāsa* idea is introduced in *Upadeśa-sāhasri* (paras. 45-73)⁴⁸ the Guru teaches quite clearly that bodily existence, the sense of the self being an agent and

enjoyer, and all sensory experience is caused entirely by *avidyā*; that knowledge of the self's essence as eternal *Paramātma*, devoid of *kartṛtva* and *bhokṛtva*, is able to remove this nescience; and that this *avidyā* is caused by superimposing (*adhyāsa*) upon this essential *Paramātmata* the entirely contradictory qualities of non-*ātma-tattva*. Aquinas⁴⁹ does not presuppose this kind of contradiction difference between finite and Infinite, creature and Creator. All predication made of the Infinite on the basis of finite experience will be imperfect but it is not a superimposition of opposites. It is, then, difficult, to see how the analogical system of Aquinas can legitimately be compared to the use Sankara makes of the principle of *lakṣaṇā*⁵⁰ by which nothing more than indirect or figurative statements can be made of the Infinite. The analogical predications of Aquinas, on the other hand, presuppose an inherent 'resemblance' between Infinite, causal Being, and finite, contingent being. Remote though such a resemblance may be,⁵¹ it is substantial enough to form the basis of analogical comparison. The relation of contingent being to Causal Being is not 'real' in exactly the same way in which the Cause relates to its effect. The relationship thus is irreversible, and the Cause independent of the effect. But there is never any question about the inherent reality of contingent being.

However, in view of Aquinas' continual stress⁵² on the non-corporeality of God, it is unlikely that he would have approved of Rāmaṇuja's style of analogical expression—even though in some respects there is a more basic agreement between Aquinas and Rāmaṇuja than between Aquinas and Sankara. The reality of the universe and empirical experience is one such common basis. The universe relates to God as body to self and therefore partakes of the reality of that Supreme Self. God's Being penetrates his whole creation, so that creation participates in, though is not identical with, his perfect Being. In an organically dependent relation with his supreme Reality, this divine 'body.' Thus there is real communication between Infinite Being and finite being—similar to that between self and body.

(11) Then there is the *intimate accessibility* of God to the universe, especially in his relationship with the *jīvas*. This idea also is illuminated by the self-body analogy. Carman⁵³ finds this concept of God making himself accessible (*saṁlabhya*) to his devotees central to Rāmaṇuja's thought, along with the concept of otherness (*paratva*) with which it stands in creative tension. Analysing the important introduction to *Gītā-bhāṣya*,⁵⁴ Carman points out that the first half concerns the inaccessibility of God—the second half proclaims his gracious accessibility. The first half lists his transcendent, abstract qualities; the second his qualities of relationship, and the acts by which he establishes this intimate relationship. Rāmaṇuja does not use the word '*saṁlabhya*' either here or elsewhere. But Carman concludes that the later commentators rightly interpret him in giving this word prominence in their terminology. From the merely human point of view God, as the *upeya* and *upaya* of salvation, is not 'easily gained.' But in that God himself creates an easy way for the sake of his chosen ones, then from the divine point of view he is '*saṁlabha*.' And "I Myself am the one who is to be attained, not merely some aspect of my nature."⁵⁵

This same passage from *Gītā-bhāṣya* extends the idea of God's *saṁlabhya* to mean that God, "unable to bear separation" from his true devotees, grants them "that perfection in meditation appropriate for obtaining (Him)." This intimacy is hyperbolically described in two other passages as interdependence of God and his devotee. "The *jñāni* does not have even the possibility of sustaining his soul without Me. He takes Me alone as his incomparable goal. Therefore without him, I cannot sustain My soul. Therefore he is My soul."⁵⁶ Again, "those who worship Me out of intense love because they cannot sustain their souls without worshipping Me exist within My very Self provided with every happiness as though their qualities were equal to Mine."⁵⁷ Clearly, the basis of this reciprocal intimacy is the prevenient grace of their Lord, who sustains the devout souls as their Supreme Self.

Of the many other passages in Rāmaṇuj's writings which bring out this idea that God makes an intimate relationship

possible with himself because He is the *śaririn* of all, we may take the closing passages of *Vedārta-saṃgraha*⁵⁸ as illustrative: "The Supreme *Brahman*...creates the entire universe out of these primeval elements controlled by spiritual souls in material conjunction, and then of his own accord enters into them as their immanent soul and exists on as the Supreme Spirit whose body is formed by all..." Then in the following paragraph: "The means of attaining *Brahman* is a superior form of *bhakti*... which is immeasurably and overwhelmingly dear to the devotee... The word *bhakti* has the sense of a kind of love, and this love again that of a certain kind of knowledge." Then in the following paragraph: "When it is realised that the soul stands in a relation of subservience to the Supreme *Brahman* because this Supreme *Brahman*...possessing an infinite supernal manifestation — ocean of immeasurable and absolute goodness, beauty and love — is the Principal to which the soul is accessory or subservient (*śeṣatva*), then the Supreme *Brahman* who is thus an object of absolute love leads the soul to Himself."

(12) Finally, we may note that the self-body analogy finds superlative expression in the idea of *God's supernatural, transcendent body*. The various special embodiments of God, such as the emanatory *vyūhas* and the occasional *avatāras*, are regarded by Vaiṣṇavas as further illustrations confirming the substantial and inseparable relationship of God with the universe. The *avatāra*-concept includes also the *arca-avatāras*,⁵⁹ or embodiment in the images, and also *guru-avatāras*. Rāmānuja makes only a few references in his major writings to these embodiments, with the obvious exception of Kṛṣṇa-avatāra in the *Gītā-bhāṣya*. But as we noted previously, this does not mean that he was indifferent to the other divine forms. And when he writes of Nārāyaṇa's individualised *avatāra* form (in *Śrī-bhāṣya*,⁶⁰ etc.), assumed for the easy apprehension of his devotees, there is no reason to limit this to Kṛṣṇa-avatāra, Rāma-avatāra, etc. In fact, some passages seem to reflect, in idealised form, the features of the temple images. But the real focus of Rāmānuja's interest was on the supernatural form of God, to which both *arca* and *avatāra* pointed.

That Rāmānuja expounded the *Gītā's avatārā-bhava* in close connection with his *ātma-śarīra-bhāva* was brought out in the earlier chapter on the *Gītā*. In any case, according to Rāmānuja, all these various *avatāra*-bodies both derive from and yet differ from God's transcendent *aprākṛta*-body, a concept of considerable importance in Viśiṣṭādvaita. Perhaps Rāmānuja intends this concept to push to the limit his argument for the personal character of God, as against the Advaitin's view of names and forms (*nāma-rūpa*) being merely phenomenal with no ultimate reality. Thus we find in the *Vedārtha Samgraha* and *Gītā-Bhāṣya* passages describing⁶¹ this transcendent body that a number of the qualities here ascribed to Nārāyaṇa relate specifically to his personal, determining will, his causal power, his gracious action for the good of his devotees, his loving relationship with them, the manifestation of his glory, and his intimate relationship with Śrī, his beautiful Consort. However, it is also true that a number of these *kalyāṇa-guṇas*, though said to be *svābhāvika* to the divine Being, refer specifically to his radiant outer form, rather than to his inner personality.⁶²

S. R. Bhatt, in a recently published thesis,⁹³ argues :

(a) that Rāmānuja differs radically from Pañcarātra and the Ālvars in a number of important doctrines. In particular Pañcarātra is said to teach an impersonal, absolute *Brahman*, and the ultimate unreality of the universe. Rāmānuja, moreover, gave no place to the important Pañcarātra doctrines of the *vyūhas* and *arca-avatāra* as well as rejecting their cosmogonies and *tāntrika* methods.

(b) On the other hand, in so far as Rāmānuja taught the supernatural form of *Brahman*, he had allowed himself to be influenced in judiciously by "anthropomorphic concepts", "mythological fancies", "sentimental expressions", "narrow orthodoxy."⁶⁴ That this notion of the supernatural body of the Supreme Being is based on scripture is no defence. As a philosopher Rāmānuja should have been above such "superstitions."

Bhatt express himself in a lively, forcefully polemic style; and the fact that Rāmānuja used so little Pañcarātra material (as

we noted in the chapter two) does call for some kind of explanation. There are clearly some difference of outlook. But to say that Pañcarātra is consistently Advaitist greatly overstates the case. More serious is his censure of Rāmānuja's idea of super natural body. From a strictly ontological or metaphysical point of view it is, no doubt, not easy to maintain the transcendent nature of this divine body, with its detailed description of such features as Lord's colour, dress, ornaments, shape, etc. However, as Carman puts it,⁶⁵ "these excellences of the human body are raised to an incomparably higher level when they are applied to the body of Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Person. The same is true, of the aspects of human personality which are applied to God." "The Supreme Person in His transcendent or celestial bodily form (*divyarūpa*) dwelling in His transcendent abode (*divyasthāna*) is inconceivable (*acintya*) and beyond the grasp of speech or thought even to the lower gods or to accomplished ascetics. He is utterly inaccessible in His transcendent form, and yet He makes Himself accessible to His creatures by manifesting His form...Both in His supreme inaccessibility and in the accessibility that He brings about by His grace, the Lord is characterised by His beautiful (*sundara*) form."⁶⁶

We can now suggest two reasons for Rāmānuja's insistence on this supernatural body.

(a) It provided a transcendent complement to the "grossly" accessible embodiments of the various kinds of *avatāras*, including the images present before the *upāsakas*. The divine reality of the latter cannot be denied; all God's bodily manifestations are occasions of real meeting with his devotees. Therefore it was necessary to provide a transcendent basis for these bodily forms, as far as this was possible within the realistic structure of Rāmānuja's thought.

(b) The supernatural form also provided a transworldly devotional focus for the somewhat diffuse concept of God's embodiment in the universe at large. It is, thus, the culmination of his self-body analogical system.

CONCLUSION

It is clear that the self-body analogy can be applied in a remarkably comprehensive way. However, the twelve theses listed above all express Rāmānuja's basic concern with two essential dimensions of the divine activity—God's transcendence and immanence. In what ways is God both related to the universe and yet other than the universe? Or, in what sense God's relationship to the universe include both 'supremacy' and 'accessibility'? These are the primary issues which any theism must take seriously and which it must attempt to explain adequately. To that extent does the self-body analogy provide such an adequate explanation? The following points may be noted in connection with this question;

(a) Modern empiricists¹ would say that the self-body relationship itself is quite unclear and therefore does not help our understanding of the God-universe relationship. Some empiricists² have gone to the rather ridiculous extent of denying the existence of any kind of identifiable self, or at least any self which can be thought of in distinction from the body. The obvious reply to this is that virtually all human experience, whether at the commonsense or the religious level, does identify some kind of self and assumes this as the basis for bodily activity. True, we experience only the embodied self, but there is always a self experiencing this embodiedness.

This self may not be thought of in exactly the way described by Rāmānuja. In fact, even Rāmānuja's attitude to the self is not without ambiguity; for example, is it the empirical ego, or the pure *ātman*, or an entity somewhere between these two that he intends? Then its atomic, eternal nature may be objected to. Even his definition of the body as controlled by the self may be found less than satisfactory. To some, the self's rather ambiguous relationship to karmic power may be an embarrassment. To others, various aspects of the twelve significations listed above may be considered debatable. But in general theists at least will find enough in Rāmānuja's understanding of the

self-body relationship to accept its validity as an analogical approach to the question of God's relationship with his universe.

(b) For some theists the self-body analogy does not adequately express the idea of the omnipotent Will of God in creating the universe.³ For the self does not 'create' the body. And when this self-body description is undergirded by the Vedāntic idea of *Brahman* as the *upādāna* of creation, as well as the effective Cause, such critics' doubts may seem to be confirmed. Does Rāmānuja's system in fact provide for an adequately theistic view of creation?⁴ A number of points can be raised by way of reply to this kind of criticism.

(i) The self-body analogy is not intended to be exhaustive in its significance; it cannot be applied to every aspect of the God-universe relationship. Perhaps the sheer Will of God as creative cause is one such case. We noted previously that Rāmānuja himself acknowledged certain instances in which the analogy cannot be applied; he also sees the creative power of God as the outstanding divine quality which is not shared by the self.

(ii) Though the word '*upādāna*' is usually translated 'material cause', this can be misleading, suggesting as it does some pre-existent material which used in the creative process. But Vedānta emphasises that the pre-creation state of *Brahman* the *Upādāna* was so subtle (*sūkṣma*), so completely unmanifest (*avyakta*) as to be pure potency of material being. Thus a more satisfactory translation of *upādāna* would be 'internal cause', or perhaps 'substantial cause'.

(iii) If it is claimed, as by Rāmānuja, that the creative Will of God is the sole cause of the universe, that for his creative act God is dependent on nothing but his own Will and Being, we may well ask how this differs from the more radical monotheistic concept of *creatio ex nihilo* (creation out of nothing). The analogy usually employed by the radical monotheist to describe the creative act is that of 'making'. But in that there is no direct analogy for making 'out of nothing' (except that of the magician), the making-analogy has often been supplemented with some analogy of emanation.⁵ We noted above that the

concept of sheer will-power as the cause of creation receives an illuminating new dimension from the supplementary idea of 'self-expression' or 'self-emanation'.

In any case, the principal need in any theistic doctrine of creation, if it is satisfactorily to preserve the supremacy of God, is to ascribe the existence of the whole universe solely to the self-existence and supreme power of God. If souls and nature (in potent state) are said to be eternal, without beginning and end, then care has to be taken to explain their eternal derivation from, and eternal dependence upon, the Being, Power and will of the Supreme Person. It was precisely to describe such eternal dependence that Rāmānuja employed so effectively the self-body analogy. Although there are other features in his system which make it less easy to explain the derivation of all things from the Supreme Person, even this concept is brought satisfactorily within the orbit of the same analogy. Rāmānuja's contribution to theological description of God and his relation to the universe is very great indeed.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. This is discussed more fully in the final chapter. We may note here that a number of Thomist scholars (especially the Jesuits) with their highly Technical system of *analogia entis*, or analogy of being, have written disparagingly of Rāmānuja's thought as "anthropomorphic pantheism." See *Religious Hinduism*, edited by R.De Smet., I have not been able to read De Smet's unpublished thesis on *The Theological Method of Śankara*, but he kindly gave me a copy of his notes on the subject. Fr. De Smet clearly finds Śankara's radical transcendentalism, more amenable to his Thomist philosophical background than the realism of inseparable relationship propounded by Rāmānuja. See also his *Śankara and Aquinas on creation* (Indian Philosophical Annual, Vol.6,1970 pp.112-118).
2. See the discussion in chapter nine *infra*.
3. The names of M. Eliade, G. Van Der Leeuw, E.O. James and B. Malinowski can be mentioned. In India philosophical studies have dominated scholarship, with a number of historical studies also, but very little comparative and phenomenological study. The near future may well see a change in this field.
4. *Śrī Rāmānuja's Theory of Knowledge* (Tirupati, 1956), Introduction, p. vi.
5. *A critical study of the Philosophy of Rāmānuja*, (Varanasi, 1967). Preface p. xxiii, and also concluding chapter. Unfortunately the quality of the book is marred by serious printing mistakes throughout.
6. In the early passages of the first *adhikaraṇa*.
7. A. N. Whitehead may hence be called the "father" of modern process philosophy but it is C. Hartshorne who has made explicit use of the "body-analogy" in his writings. Cf: *Philosophers speak of God; Man's Vision of God; The Divine*

Relativity. He describes² "Pan-en-theism as "the view that deity is...distinguishable from and independent of any and all relative items, and yet, taken as an actual whole, includes all relative items" (p.91)

8. Bishop John Robinson gives popular expression to this dissatisfaction, suggesting that a "pan-en-theistic" view of God is the only viable one. Cf. *Exploration into God* (London, 1967).

9. *The Philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita* (Adyar, 1943)

10. *op. cit.*, p. 126.

11. *Viśiṣṭādvaita - Philosophy and Religion*, edit. V. S. Raghavan (Madras, 1974)

12. *The Gītā-Bhāṣya of Rāmanuja*, trans. M. R. Sampat Kumaran, (Madras, 1969) pp. 526-8.

13. *The System of the Vedānta*, p. 5. Deussen claims that the *Sūtras* and Śankara's *Bhāṣya* should be taken as "an indivisible whole for the purpose of systematic exposition."

14. Eg. in *The Vedānta Philosophy*. However, after reading Thibaut's introduction to the *Sūtras*, Muller appears to have changed his mind about the philosophical position embodied in them.

15. *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. XII, p. 597.

16. *A History of Indian Philosophy* (5 Vol.) Vol. I, p. 429. It may be noted, however, that in his study of the three *prasthanas* of Vedānta, viz., *Upaniṣads*, *Gītā* and *Sūtras*, Dasgupta did not find Śankara's exposition of them authentic or faithful to the original meaning.

17. *A study of the Vedānta*, p. 29.

18. *op. cit.*, p. 30.

19. *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 712.

20. *Sacred Books of the East*, Edit. F. Max Muller, Vol. XXXIV (1904)

21. *The Vedānta* (published in English 1926, but written in 1918).

22. Bodhyana (SB(T) p. 3) is the ancient authority upon whose commentary Rāmanuja claims to base his own teachings, referring to him as "*Vṛtti-Kāra*" (SB(t) 206, 261, 302, 337). Cf. VS (VB) 18 - 24. But Dramiḍa is the "*Pūrvā-cārya*," sometimes called "*Bhāṣya-kāra*," and most frequently quoted. Tanka is probably the "*Vākya-kāra*" (SB(t) 15 - 18, 24, 99, 138, 317).

23. *op. cit.*, p. vii

24. *op. cit.*, p. 184.

CHAPTER I

1. The rich traditions relating to Rāmanuja's life have been conveniently gathered together by A. Govindacharaya in *The Life of Rāmānujāchārya* Madras, 1906) and by C. R. Srinivasa Aiyengar in *The Life and Teachings of Śri Rāmānujāchārya* (Madras).

2. Carman, *op. cit.*, pp. 27. 44-6, suggests 1077-1157 AD for Rāmanuja's life, but he admits he may have lived considerably more than 80 years. "Unfortunately, however, it is very difficult to put all the dates given in the traditional biographies (some of them conflicting), inscriptional evidence from Mysore, and our knowledge of the Coḷa kings of the period, together into one coherent pattern." (p.44)

3. K. C. Varadachari's *Ālvārs of South India* (Bombay, 1966) is a useful introduction to their teachings, though tending to "philosophise." J. S. M. Hooper's *Hymns of the Ālvārs* is a translation of selected songs, with comments. The whole *Prabandham* is available in 4 Vols. in the original (Madras, 1956).

4. "Four thousand sacred collection."

4a. Edited and translated (with an introduction) by R. Ramanujachari and K. Srinivasacharya (Madras, 1972).

5. Ed. and trans. by J. A. B. Van Buitenen (Rāmanuja Research Society, Madras 1971)

6. Included with transtation in M.R. Sampat Kumaran's *The Gtā-Bhāṣya of Rāmānuja* (Madras, 1969).
7. Translated by Swami Adidevananda (Madras 1967).
8. The Śrī-Vaiṣṇava Ācārya did not necessarily become a Sanyāsi, this being in sharp contrast to Śaiva and Sankara's system. Obviously the Vedāntic *realism* of Viśiṣṭādvaita is reflected in a more positive attitude to daily life and social relationships.
9. One version claims that Kūrattālvān tricked the previous high priest into handing over the keys.
10. It is also said the Nambi embraced Rāmānuja and called him "Emberumanar," "Our Lord."
11. He is said to have visited Kashmir and there to have read Bodhāyana's *Sūtra-bhāṣya*. It had to be returned immediately, so Rāmānuja was dependent on Kūrattālvān's incredible memory for later knowledge of it.
12. Twelve years according to the tradition.
13. Edited and translated by J.A.B. Van Buitenen (Poona, 1956); by S. S. Ragavachary (Mysore, 1956); and by M. R. Rajagopala Aiyangar (Madras, 1956). All Rāmānuja's works are available in the original, edited and collected in one volume *Śrī Bhagavad Rāmānuja Grantha-māla* by P. B. Annangarāchārya (Kanchipuram 1956).
14. Translated by G. Thibaut in *Sacred Books of the East*. Vol. XLVIII (Oxford 1904); by M. Rangacharya and M. B. V. Aiyangar (Madras 1961 to 1965)
15. Western scholars such as R. Otto and O. Lacombe regarded this one section as a treatise complete in itself.
16. The former has been translated by K. Bhāsyam (Madras, 1959), and into German by A. Hohenberger (Bonn, 1960); the latter by M. B. Narasimha Ayyangar (Adyar 1953)
17. VS(VB), p. 32. He wonders why Rāmānuja should want to write such summaries of what was available fully in *Śrī-Bhāṣya*, rather than write commentaries on the Upaniṣads.

18. Translated by M. R. Sampat Kumaran (Madras, 1969)
19. Thus the conclusion of R. C. Zaehner in his important commentary *The Bhagavad-gītā* (Oxford, 1969)
- 19a Only *Śaraṇāgati-gādyā* is available in English. Eg., in "Viśiṣṭādvaita-philosophy and religion" (Ed. V. S. Raghavan), translated by S. V. Srinivasan.
20. Cf. the arguments against their authenticity, brought forward by the vaḍagalai scholar Pandit Agnihotram Rāmānuja Thātāchariar, as listed conveniently by Carman, *op. cit.* pp. 298-9. See carman's able defence of Gadyas authenticity, *op. cit.* pp. 230-6.

CHAPTER II

1. *Rāmānuja on the Bhagavadgita* (The Hague, 1953), p. 5. The period during and following the decline of Buddhism (about 500-1200 AD) was, next to the period 750 - 500 BC, a time of the greatest flux in Indian religious thought.
2. *op. cit.*, *passim*.
3. Cf. VS (VB) pp. 33 - 39.
4. Thus e.g., *op. cit.* p. 57, "...in the later Upaniṣads, notably the *Śvetāśvatara*, the Supreme Being came to be thought of in moral and religious terms. The same process, whereby religion steps in to clothe the Absolute of the philosophers with flesh and blood, is observable, but to an immeasurably greater extent in the Bhagavadgītā.
5. *op. cit.*, pp. 92 - 126. Within this same section Kumarappa also examines the teachings of the *Nārāyaṇīya* and *Anugītā* sections of the *Mahābhārata*, and the *Bhāgavata-Purāṇa* in all of which expressions of Vaiṣṇava religion can be found, though they do not appear to have been among Rāmānuja's "primary sources" in the same way in which *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* could have been on the evidence of *Śrī-Bhāṣya*'s citations. But see *infra*.
6. In the Rāmānuja Research Society's recent publication *Viśiṣṭādvaita* there are useful essays on pañcarātra, esp. by V. Varadachari pp. 235-253.

7. *op.cit.*, pp. 127-142. See also K. C. Varadachari, *Alvārs of South India*.

8. *op. cit.*, p. 193.n.1. See also pp. 149, 163, 185-6. Kumarappa argues that to gain recognition beyond the limits of his own sect he "omits tenets which are distinctively sectarian and with great insight fixes on what is essential and seeks to find support for it in the teaching of the *Upaniṣads*." (p.149)

9. *Op. cit.*, pp.206-7. Kumarappa suggests (p.226) that Rāmānuja was able to use the body-soul analogy with effect to teach distinction between God and the universe, because body and soul are set in opposition in much of his source-material. But what is more remarkable, as Kumarappa himself has to point out (p.230,) is Rāmānuja's intention to show the usefulness of the body to its self. It is thus a distinction of *apposition* rather than opposition.

10. GB (VB), p. 1.

11. VS (VB), p. 69.

12. VS (VB), pp. 48 - 69.

13. i. e., in relation to Pūrva-Mimāṃsa.

14. An unambiguous statement by Sankara in which this viewpoint is set forth can be found for example in his *Sūtra-Bhāṣya* IV. iii, 14. (Thibaut *op. cit.*; Vol II, pp. 400 - 402 e.g., "To what sphere then belong the scriptural texts about the soul's going?—To the sphere of qualified knowledge, we reply." (p.400). "Only in consequence of the distinction of the higher and lower *Brahman* not being ascertained, statements about the soul's going which apply to the lower *Brahman* are wrongly put in connection with the higher *Brahman*." (p.401).

15. See Chapter VI, *infra*

16. The 'great statements' are those texts such as 'tat tvam asi', 'Satyam jñānam anantam brahman', 'sad-eva somyedam agra-āsid-ekam evādvitīyam', etc., which no doubt stand out in the *Upaniṣads* as of great intrinsic importance.

17. Of the passage here cited by Van Buitenen (and Rāmānuja) as *Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad* I.12, only the words

"*bhoktabhogyam preritaram ca matva*" are in this text, See, e.g. Radhakrishnan, *The Principal Upaniṣads*, p.716. Other words are from *Svetāśvatara* I.6.

18. VS (VB), para. 86, p.244.

18a. Madras, 1972. This is a valuable study in Rāmānuja's methodology.

19. *op.cit.*, p.59. See SB (T), pp. 27 - 29.

20. *op.cit.*, Cp. Lacombe (*op.cit*) 79 ff. Van Buitenen claims that by taking *lakṣaṇa* (n) as feminine, he misinterprets. It is of interest that Lacombe like a number of scholars steeped in the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas, shows greater appreciation of Sankara's absolutism than Rāmānuja's "relationism." See also the writings of Richard de Smet of Poona. Thus Lacombe, *op. cit.*, p.81. while "finite things are provided with their attributes (*dharmavat*) they are not them by pure identity...in "*satyam jñānam anantam Brahman*" each attribute is itself the subject by identity...it is our limited means of conception which forces us to break this unity and express it in dispersive and relative ways which are only appropriate to that which is finite." (My translation from the French). Lacombe goes on to say that "this idea of indirect expression" is the basis of the *analogical* aspect of Sankara's system. This we shall need to discuss in the final chapter.

21. E.g., SB (T), pp. 29, 79, etc.

22. VS (VB), pp. 66 - 68. Thibaut translates *prakaraṇa* "leading subject-matter," i.e., that intention which is established by making the *upakrama*, or initial statement and *upasamhara*, or concluding statement, agree in a legitimate way.

23. E.g., SB III, ii. 21, (SB (T), pp. 615 - 617).

24. Viz., *dve vāva brahmaṇo rupe mū tam caivāmūrtam ca. martyam cāmṛtam, ca, sthitam ca, yac ca, sac ca, tyac ca.*

25. SB. III. ii. 21.

26. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* VI. 8.7. *sa ya eso' nima aited ātmyam idam sarvam, tat satyam, sa ātmā: tat tvam asi, svetaketo, iti.*

27. Translated by Radhakrishnan: "That which is the subtle essence this whole world has for its self." *The Principal Upaniṣads*, p. 458).

28. *op. cit.*, p. 185.

29. Van Buitenen describes the *Gītā*'s canonical position as "ambiguous." "It is called an *Upaniṣad*, but forming part of *itihāsa* it is *smṛti*, albeit a *smṛti* which has more prestige than many a *śruti* text." (GB(VB) p. 7).

30. Kumarappa, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

31. SB I.i.I. SB (T) 78 ff.

32. SB I.i.I. SB (T) pp. 14-16.

33. Kulandran, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-170, takes this idea too far: In Rāmānuja "the way of devotion was the way of knowledge at its best: *Bhakti* was simply a form of meditation (*dhyāna*), a method of knowledge...as the *Advaitins* themselves had laid down...*Brahman* he insists, must not be meditated (on) as distinct from the self of the individual." But to say that the *prapatti*-idea is missing (explicitly) from his Bhāṣya teaching on *bhakti* is not to say that his *bhakti* differs from *jñāna-mārga* is no way. This delicate question of whether Rāmānuja taught *prapatti* or not is judiciously discussed by Carman in *The Theology of Rāmānuja*, New York, 1974, pp. 62-3, 214-37, 298-300.

34. Ch. Four, *infra*.

35. VS (VB), p. 65

36. Hence, e.g., in the opening verses of *Bṛhad-āranyaka-Upaniṣad* (connected with the *Sata-patha-Brahmaṇa* in which the *aśva-medha* is described at length) the *aśva-medha* or horse-sacrifice is meditated on as symbolic of the universe and its origins.

37. See Danielou (*op. cit.*) pp.188-230 for the many-sided features of Śiva, esp. as expressed by his various synonyms. For some reason *Naṭa-rāj*, one of his most popular forms, today is not included. See also *The Indian Theogony*, by S. Bhattacharji (Cambridge University Press, 1970, esp. pp. 109-207. However, a number of her conclusions are questionable.

38. See VS (VB), p.183, n. 6, Van Buitenen suggesting that Rāmānuja uses this name in his opening *śloka* "for the double purpose of stating at the outset Rāmānuja's Vaiṣṇava persuasion and of suggesting God's all-pervasiveness: *viṣṇu* = *vyāptin/vyāpaka*." See also S. Bhattacharji, *op. cit.*, Ch.14.

39. See *Viśiṣṭādvaita Philosophy and Religion* pp. 212-264. Also Cf. *An Introduction to the Pañcarātra*, F. Otto Schrader (1973).

40. *op. cit.*, p.27. VS (VB), p. 37. But we should note the statement by Lacombe (*L' Absolu selon le Vedanta*, p.24) that "it was the Pañcarātra, rejected by Śankara as semi-heterodox, which was to become the point of departure for the Rāmānuja school, a new Vedāntic school resolutely opposed to Śankara's own." He means principally by this the *bhakti*-experience related to "a personal, unique God (*ekāntika dharma*)." (p. 25). Van Buitenen (VS (VB), p.37) even suggests that this probably extremely "ancient" system was "one of the main channels by which the old Brahmanistic spirit continued to flow through the waste land of the Buddhist period", then later received new inspiration from the popular beliefs around the divine figure of Viṣṇu..."

41. *op. cit.*, (Vol, XXXIV, Pt.1.) p. xxxi. n. 1

42. *op. cit.*, pp. 94-5.

43. *op. cit.*, p. 191.

44. *Mān-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī, man namas-kuru mam ev 'aiṣyasi yuktva' aivam ātmānam mat-parāyaṇaḥ*. B. G. IX. 34. As Zaehner comments (*op. cit.*, p.286) "So little is this to Śankara's taste that his interpretation violates the perfectly straightforward grammar of the last sentence." Here follows a valuable extended note on the relation of 'liberation' to 'loving devotion' in the Gita.

45. Cf. *The Gītā-bhāṣya of Rāmānuja*, translated by M. R. Sampat Kumaran, pp. 274-6. Kumarappa (p. 192) quotes Govindacharya's translation of the comment on IX. 34: "Me, the sole asylum of all excellencies, exempt from fault; me the omniscient; me of indomitable will; me, of the lotus-like

clear and large eyes, and of uniform blue cloud-hue; me, of all resplendence as if a thousand suns had simultaneously shone: me, the nectar-ocean of loveliness, of arms four...me, again the ocean of infinite mercy, compassion, beauty, etc.,

46. *op. cit.*, p. 192.

47. *op. cit.*, pp. 311-315. Kumarappa contends that Rāmānuja sees the reason for the Lord's *avatār*-forms to be in providing opportunities for loving adoration to his devotees, which is said to be identical with Pañcarātra *vyūha*-doctrine. The latter point is correct, but this is not the only purpose of the *avatār* according to Rāmānuja.

48. The six attributes Kumarappa considers evidence of Viṣṇu-Purāṇic influence are: "wisdom (*jñāna*), strength (*bala*), lordship (*aiśvarya*), might (*vīrya*), energy (*śakti*), and glory (*tejas*). Each of these attributes could well have originated from quite non-'sectarian' sources, but the manner of their citation in this order together confirms Kumarappa's view.

49. So E. Carpenter, *Theism in Medieval India*. The consensus of critical scholarly opinion dates *Srī-Bhāgavata* between Ālvārs and Rāmānuja.

50. *op. cit.*, p. 95.

51. *op. cit.*, 116, n.l.

52. Cf. the generally Advaitist interpretation of Siddhesvara Bhattacharya in *Philosophy of Śrīmad - Bhāgavata* (Santiniketan-1960).

53. Approx. 54. times.

54. Approx. 40 times.

55. The *Gītā* is cited more than twice as frequently as the Viṣṇu-Purāṇa.

56. In almost 150 places.

57. Approx. 100 times.

58. *op. cit.*, p. 186.

CHAPTER III

1. See VS (VB) paras, 6, 10, 13, 14, 17 - 21. There is virtually no reference to *smṛti* until para 42.

2. *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XLIV, pp. 172, 403.

3. Purusa was not the only figure to be identified with Nārāyaṇa. For the complex origins of the Vaiṣṇava deity, see Bhandarkar, *op. cit.*, and S. Bhattacharji, pp. 293 - 4.

4. I.4.1 - 5.

5. *Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣad*, I.1.3.

6. See Kumārappa, *op. cit.*, pp. 10 - 25.

7. *op. cit.*, 11 ff. In the Upaniṣads the masculine *Ātma* is frequently used but I have kept the neuter form *Ātman* throughout merely for convenience.

8. *Aitareya-Upaniṣad* I. 1.1 - 3. *Ātma* creates the *Puruṣa* as a guardian of the world, drawing him out of the waters and giving him shape. Cf. Radhakrishnan, *Principal Upaniṣads*, p. 515.

9. E.g., in *Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad*.

10. *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* 1.4.16. "Atho ayam vā ātma sarveṣāṃ bhūtānām lokah."

11. *op. cit.*, pp. 19 - 20.

12. *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* III.7. (Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.* pp., 224-9).

13. See pp. 87 - 127, and *passim* in *Vedārtha-Saṃgraha* and *Gītā-bhāṣya*.

14. i.e. *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*, I.2.68-69; I.22.38; VI.5.83 - 87.

15. M. R. Sampat Kumaran, *op. cit.*, pp. 535 - 545.

16. See Śrī Yāmunāchārya's *Siddhi-Traya* translated by R. Ramanujachari and K. Srinivasacharya (Madras, 1972). The three are *Ātma-siddhi*, *Īśvara-siddhi* and *Samvit-siddhi*.

17. GB (VB) pp. 9 - 12.

18. VS (VB), pp. 43 - 48.
19. D.G. Vol. III, p.155. See pp. 139 - 155.
20. *Āṃśa-aṃśi-bhāva-lakṣaṇaḥ samavāya.*
21. *para-tantratā-lakṣaṇaḥ śeṣa śeṣitva-rūpaḥ.*
22. Ramanujachari and Srinivasacharya include these sentences only as a variant reading.
23. *eka-ādheya-vidheya-śeṣa-bhāvam.*
24. *tat-śarīratvan mat śarīratvat.* Van Buitenen here notes (p.45) that this reading is not generally found in the Mss used by the Sanskrit editors, but there is no valid reason to discard it, for their "critical principles remain completely mysterious."
25. *eka-icchā-anvidhayi-idam acaitanyāt sva-dehavat.* "Conscious" would be a better translation than "spiritual," for *caitanya*. Nor has the force of *sva* been brought out.
26. Thus *op. cit.*, p.48, "Rāmānuja developed and elaborated systematically what Yāmuna had already discovered. Yāmuna did not exhaust the fertile concept of *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva*, but it is clear that his thoughts went in the direction of this analogy as the basic solution."
27. Introduction to *op. cit.*, pp. xi and xii.
28. *Contribution of Yāmuna to Viśiṣṭādvaita*, (Madras, 1971), esp Ch.VI.
29. *op. cit.*, p. 311.
30. Ramanujachari and Srinivasacharya, *op. cit.*, pp.127-8.
31. *op. cit.*, p. 158.
32. Eg. pp. 71, 78 - 9.
33. R. Ramanujachari, *op. cit.*, Introduction, p.24.
34. Quoted by Sengupta, *op. cit.*, p.183.
35. *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17 and Chapter. 2.
36. *op. cit.*, p. 17.
37. *op. cit.*, p. 210.

38. I am dependent largely on O. Schrader's interpretation of Pāñca-rātra especially his *Introduction to the Pāñcarātra and the Ahirbudhnya Samhita* (Adyar, 1973). There also useful material in the four articles on the subject in *Viśiṣṭādvaita-Philosophy: and Religion*, V. Varadachari's *Pāñcarātra and Vaiṣṇavism* (pp 235-253) being the most informative. Teaching about the Vyūhas is found principally in the *Sanatkumāra-Samhita* and the *Sāttvata-samhita*.

39. Cf. V. Varadachari, *op. cit.*, pp. 240, 246 - 251.

40. Thus in *Īśvara-samhita*. "*Dāsabhūtaḥ svataḥ sarve hyātmanaḥ paramātmanaḥ*".

CHAPTER IV

1. R.C. Zaehner has produced a monumental commentary (*op. cit.*). Despite some hypothetical interpretations his general conclusions are entirely convincing and in the main are followed here.

2. The dating of the *Gītā* has ranged from post-Christian by some (based on supposed Christian influence) to pre-Buddhist (based on lack of Buddhist influence). Dasgupta surprisingly favoured this latter theory (D. G. vol. II pp. 548 - 552), despite the fairly obvious evidence of Buddhist influence in many *Gītā* doctrines. The over-riding concern to preserve (Brahmanic) society while allowing a means of salvation to the lower castes, and to avoid *Sannyasa*, suggests (sociologically speaking) a reaction to the Buddhist success among Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and the common people. Perhaps first century BC would be a reasonable date to suggest for the *Gītā*'s composition. Some may think its synthetic viewpoint reflects a somewhat later period.

2a. Zaehner (*op. cit.*, p. 141) seems to over-complicate the meaning of *yoga* in the *Gītā* when he says it "is used in a vast number of senses." 6.10 - 29 is the crucial passage on *yoga*.

2b. *op. cit.* p. 233.

- 2c. Thus 6.47—*yoginām-apī sarveṣām mad-gaten āntarāt-manā; śradhāvān bhajate yo mām, asme yuktatamo mataḥ* Also, for example 8.13 - 16.
3. Of which 2nd part runs. *parasparam bhāvayantaḥ śreyaḥ param avāpsyatha*.
4. The first clear call by Krishna to personal faith in him *mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi samnyasya*. In 2.61 meditation on Krishna was suggested as a means to self-control.
5. Translated by Van Buitenen, *Rāmānuja on the Bhagavadgītā* (the Hague, 1953) pp. 73 - 4. Sampatkumaran's translation came to hand after these notes were prepared.
6. Commentary on 7.4, 8-13 (*op. cit.*, pp. 100 - 2)
7. *Jñānavān mām prapadyate, Vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti, sa mahā ātmā*.
8. Van Buitenen, *op. cit.*, p. 104.
9. *Jñāni tv ātmā aiva me matam*.
10. *op. cit.*, p. 104.
11. *op. cit.*, p. 137.
12. *op. cit.*, p. 116. 9.15 refers to the object of "knowledge-sacrifice" as *ekatva* and *pṛthaktva*, who has *bahudā* and *viśvato-mukham*.
13. *op. cit.* p. 118. "Those devoted to other gods really worship me."
14. See also on 10.21 - 38, p. 125.
15. On 7.12-13. *op. cit.*, pp. 101 - 2.
16. This concept, and whether Rāmānuja teaches that the universe has no purpose, will be discussed later, especially in the final chapter.
17. 9.4: *mayā tauam idam sarvam jagad avyakta-mūrtinā; mat sthāni sarva-bhūtāni, na c' āhm teṣv avasthitaḥ*;
18. *op. cit.*, pp. 113-114. See also on 13.13-15, 22. pp. 143, 145.

19. SB. II. iii. 22-25. SB (T). pp. 546-8.
20. *op. cit.*, pp. 142-3. See 137-47.
21. *op. cit.*, pp. 146-7.
22. *op. cit.*, pp. 124-6. 10.20: *aham ātmā, Guḍākeśa, sarvabhūt' āśaya-sthitaḥ aham ādiś ca madhyaś ca bhūtānām anto eva ca*. Then he refers to himself in 10.39 as *sarva-bhūtānām bijam*, apart from whom nothing can exist.
23. For *Sāmāna-adhikarāṇya* concept see *infra*. Chapters on Bhedābheda and Advaita.
24. Van Buitenen translates *avasthā-bijabhūtam* as "core" here.
25. *op. cit.*, p. 124.
26. *op. cit.*, p. 29.
27. See *infra*. Final chapter.
28. GB (VB) p. 137.
29. Citing the Upaniṣads *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka* III.7.3 - 22, *Taittirīya* III.11.1. and *Subāla* VIII. in comment on *Gītā* 13.2.
30. The Upaniṣads *Chāndogya* VI. 2.1, 3-6 *Taittirīya*. II. 6.2-3.
31. Obviously this kind of logical concept will not be explicit in the *Gītā*'s thought.
32. GB (VB) p. 101, see note 293 in which he translates Rāmānuja's definition of this term, SB (I. i. 1.) SB (T) p. 79, as "the function of (several) terms to signify one object, there being a different purpose for the application for each different term."
33. *op. cit.*, p. 137.
34. *apṛtha-sidhi* will be seen to play an important role as Rāmānuja's system is further explored.
35. See also on 10.21 - 38, *ibid.* p. 125.
36. *op. cit.*, p. 115.

37. *op. cit.* p. 105. 7.24 speaks of these who know nothing of his "*param bhāvam as avyayam and anuttamam.*"

38. *op. cit.*, pp. 126 - 7. In 11.2 there is reference to Krishna's *māhātmyam* which is *avyayam*.

39. See Zaehner (*Bhagavadgītā*) pp. 245 - 6 on the two natures of the Supreme Being. Radhakrishnan's translation is followed in general here.

40. *mattaḥ parataram n'ānyat kimcid asti...mayi sarvam idam protam sūtre maṇi-gaṇā iva.*

41. Cf. Zaehner (*op. cit.*, 247).

42. *na tv aham teṣu, te mayi.*

43. *sarvam idam jagat mohitam, n'ābhijānati mām ebhyaḥ param avyaya.*

44. See Zaehner (*op. cit.*) pp. 274-6, Note 9.5-*na ca bhūta-sthomam' atṁā bhūta-bhāvanaḥ.*

45. See note 122 *supra*.

46. The last verse before the great manifestation. "...*viṣṭabhy' aham idam kṛtsnam ek' aṁṣena sthito jagat.*"

47. "...an account of the tremendous vision in which the universe in all its variety is seen as Krishna's body—all its multiplicity converging on to one." (Zaehner, *op. cit.*, p.303)

48. *ih'aika-stham jagat mama dehe.*

49. *op. cit.*, pp. 207-210.

50. *op. cit.*, GB (VB), pp. 6-8.

51. *op. cit.*, p.6.

52. Mythological thought being expressed in non-critical, non-systematic forms, whatever may be its inner logic, or structure, or power as a means of symbolic expression.

53. The debate with Buddhism is relatively insignificant in Rāmānuja's writings.

CHAPTER V

1. SB (T), p. 3. *Srī Bhāgavad Rāmānuja Granthamala*, p. 49. *Atha-śabda ānantarye bhavati: atas-śabdo vṛttasya hetu-bhāve.*

2. SB (T) p. 5. RGM *karma-brahma-mimāmsayor-aika-śāstryam*. When the "Vṛtti-kāra" calls Brahma-Mimāṃsā the "*śārīra-doctrine*," Rāmānuja explains this as reference to the embodied self, for him carrying two meanings. (SB (T), p. 230).

3. SB (T), pp. 16-18. Also SB, III, iv. 26 (SB (T), pp. 669-700. ("steady remembrance"-*dhruvā-smṛti*)

4. SB (T), p.19. *nitya-anitya-vastu-viveka.*

5. SB (T), p.4. *alpa-asthira-phala.*

6. SB (T), p.8. RGM. p.50 *vedānta-vākya-vicāraḥ kartavya dharma vicāro'pi kartavyah.*

7. Chapter VII, *infra*.

8. As belying the reality of the *bhakta-bhagavān* relationship.

9. E.g., VS (VB), p.236. *niyantr-Rāmanuja* uses here as synonym for *praśāstr* in *Manu-smṛti* 12.122. The *āntaryāmin* concept takes on very similar meaning in Rāmānuja's teaching.

10. *kartā*. So in SB, II, iii. 33-41. SB (T), 553-8.

11. See last chapter *infra*. . The later difference between the Tengalai sect, teaching the 'cat-method', and Vadagalai sect, teaching the 'monkey-method', is not unrelated to this possible ambiguity.

12. SB (T), pp.15-16.

13. *vṛṇute (vivṛṇute)*. *Kaṭha-Upaniṣad* II. 23.

14. *anusmṛti* (RGM). p.53.

15. *sōkṣāt-kāra* may be thought to belong more to Sankara's intuitional system reflecting the notion of immediate

intuited knowledge as it does. But, in fact, the term belongs as such to the Vaiṣṇava tradition, especially denoting the direct apprehension of the deity either in his Vyūha forms (see Schrader) or in the devotee's contemplation of *arca* or *avatāra*.

16. *sa eva pareṇa-ātmanā varaṇīyo bhavatīti tena-eva labhyate para ātma.* (RGM. p. 53.)

17. *evam-rupā dhruvā anusmṛtir-eva bhakti-śaddena-abhidhīyate* (Ibid).

18. SB (T) p. 16.

19. See after note 61.

20. Chapter XII. This criticism is made despite the lucidity of Hirianna, and in general his ability to single out the really important factors in any system. Even in this chapter, on its second page he touches on the principal issue for Mīmāṃsaka; "it looks upon the Veda as essentially a book of ritual." (p. 299). He also points out the relatively late emergence of Mīmāṃsaka's concern for mokṣa as dominant over the immediate concern for proper sacrificial performance. But this 'practical' basis of the school is not sufficiently related to the whole body of its doctrines.

21. DG. Vol. I Chapter IX. But see last three pages 403 - 5.

22. E. g., DG. Vol. I, pp. 402-3, Hirianna (*op. cit.*, p. 323) quotes Kumārila's *śloka-vārtika*. St. 113: "There never was a time when the world was other-wise than now: *na kadācit anidṛśam jagat.*"

23. Held also by Śankara, as befits his "idealist" understanding of the absolute *Brahman*. See A. Bhattacharyya (*Studies in Post Śankara Dialectics*) pp. 120 - 136. We may also note here that Śankara's notion of the 'implied' and 'secondary' meaning (of scripture) was possibly derived from the Mīmāṃsakas, some of whom held that imperative sentences in ordinary life frequently do not have the same power of originating action as is the case with the command, e.g., to sacrifice.

24. *op. cit.*, p. 372.

25. Thus for Mīmāṃsaka it is Vedic "idealism" motivating the *svataḥ-prāmāṇya* view.

26. See Hirianna, *op. cit.*, p. 332, These "later exponents" (citing the *Mīmāṃsa-nyāya-prakāśā* of Apadeva, AD 1650) "replace the divergent *phalas* of the several *karmas* by the single one of "pleasing God" by their performance. This change is quite against the atheistic spirit of the Mīmāṃsa and shows how completely the *Gītā* ideal influenced orthodox thought."

27. In Prabhākara at least, for we should notice some divergence on this point between Kumārila and Prabhākara.

28. In this case in both Prabhākara and Kumārila the tendency to a mokṣa-orientated system, and hence a *darśana*-viewpoint, is found.

29. See DG. Vol. I. p. 402.

30. Thus, despite the "idealist" outlook suggested by notions of self-validity, all stages of perception are accepted "realistically."

31. DG. Vol. I, p. 374. Also Bhattacharyya (*op. cit.*) p. 124 - 8.

32. A slight difference from Prabhākara here.

33. Bhattacharyya (*op. cit.*) 263 - 4.

34. This issue arose early in the debates of Indian philosophies, clearly seeming to be a useful illustration for anyone seeking to disprove the reliability and hence reality of the objective world.

35. Quoted by Bhattacharyya (*op. cit.*) both of Rāmānuja (p. 96) and of Mīmāṃsaka (p. 273).

36. See *infra*.

37. *op. cit.*, p. 270. Rāmānuja...propounds a new principle, viz., that of pragmatism..."

38. See further Bhattacharyya (*op. cit.* p. 265) Rāmanuja corroborates this epistemological realism by a reference to the metaphysical doctrines of Pañcikaṛaṇa or Trivṛtkaraṇa." Bhattacharyya, as a disciple of Śankara, dismisses this explanation as "arbitrary and fanciful."
39. Bhattacharya, *op. cit.*, 270 - 1.
40. SB (T) 120 - 1. "In dreams...the divinity creates, in accordance with the merit and demerit of living beings, things of a special nature, subsisting for a certain time only, and perceived only by the individual soul for which they are meant." (Here follows a passage from *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV. 3. 10.)
41. *op. cit.*, 318.
42. Kumrila does seem to have admitted that some parts of the Vedas are not of this injunctive character, either directly or indirectly and are consequently useless.
43. Cf. his argument against Nyāya, chapter nine *infra*. We may note that against Śankara he may appear to place *pratyakṣa* over *śabda* (see SB (T) 73 - 78) but this is not in fact the case.
44. SB (T) pp. 8, 12-19, etc.
45. SB (T) pp. 4 - 6.
46. SB (T) p. 5. RGM p.49. *icchāyā iṣyamāṇa-pradhāna tvād-iṣyamāṇam jñānamiha vidhīyate.*
47. SB (T), p. 4.
48. *op. cit.* RGM p. 49 *bṛhatvam ca svarūpeṇa, guṇais-ca yatra-anavadhika-atiśayam so'sva mukhyo' rthaḥ; sa ca sarveśvara eva.*
49. See e.g. Bhandarkar's *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism, etc.* Rāmanuja's semantic considerations give some clue to his analogical method.
50. SB (T), pp. 174 - 200 (SB I. i. 4).
51. There is an extensive debate with both Advaita and Bhedaḥeda in this adhikaraṇa.

52. VS (VB), p. 53. See whole section, pp. 50-56.
53. SB. I, i.4. (VS (VB), p.56). SB (T) p.174.
54. RGM. p. III. *na ia...brahmaṇi samanvitānām pravṛtti-nivṛtti-rūpa prayojana-virahād-anya-paratvam.*
55. *Ibid. sva-viṣaya-avabodha-paryavasāyitvat-sarva-pramāṇānām.*
56. *Ibid. na ca prayojana-anuguṇa pravṛtitiḥ.*
57. *Ibid. na ca...prayojana-sūnyatvam; puruṣa-artha anvaya-pratīteḥ*
58. Thus also *Brahman's* own action in creating the world by *līla-vibhūti*. His perfection remains complete in that there is not some further, still unfulfilled, end to be attained for *Brahman* to be complete in himself, though there maybe some such *prayojana* for his creation to become complete.
59. *Viz.*, in *Vedārtha-Saṃgraha* and in the early sections of SB. I.i.1.
60. *parama-puruṣa-artha.*
61. Van Buitenen (VS (VB).p.57) cannot accept R.V. De Smet's (*The Theological Method of Śankara*) attempt to trace Śankara's major-minor distinction to the *vidhī-artha* textual distinction of Mīmāṃsaka. *19. Ninian Smart's thesis (*op.cit.* Chapter X) that it is usually the "religious factors" (not necessarily theistic) which provide the proper basis for understanding the development of philosophical argumentation is convincing. This cannot, of course, be taken in any simplistic sense. For example, because a particular type of deity appears in a system, it cannot be predicated that its proponents will of necessity argue in a certain way. Obviously, the particular character of the deity, and the manner in which other strands in the system are related to this deity, will complicate the development of this system as a whole and in its philosophical argument. But in the case of Pūrva-Mīmāṃsa atleast, Smart's contention seems to be confirmed rather impressively. "It is possible to show roughly why the various viewpoints and schools of Indian metaphysics assumed the

shapes that they did. It is often the case that a metaphysical system is a coherent elaboration of a single main thesis, or of some few central theses...It needs to be remembered too, that Indian philosophy is on the whole markedly *traditional*..... Consequently, the shape of a system is often determined, so far as we can see, by factors other than those of speculative inquiry. This is a further reason why there is a need to consider the systems in relation to underlying religious intuitions which, more often than not, they express." (p.124).

62. *anubhūti-mātra, san-mātra, jñāna-mātra-svarūpa.*
63. SB (T), p. 81 RGM. p. 65. *na tāvatā nirviśeṣa-jñāna-mātram-eva-tattvam, jñātur-eva jñāna-svarūpatvāt-tasya jñāna-āśrayatvam.*
64. SB (T), pp. 82 - 4, 146, etc.,
65. SB (T), pp. 148 - 156, RGM. pp. 102-5.
66. SB (T), p. 148.
67. SB (T), p. 150. RGM. p. 103.
68. SB (T), p. 151. RGM. p. 103, *pari niṣpannam param brahma.*
69. *aparimita-phalam.*
70. *tan-nirṇaya-phalo brahma vicāraḥ kartavyaḥ.*
71. *brahma-vid-āpnoti paramityādibhir-brahma-prāptih.*
72. *pratipanna-upāsanā-viśaya-karya-adhikṛta-phalatvena... brahma svarūpa tad-viśeṣaṇānām.*
73. Hiriyanna (*op. cit.*, p. 330) remarks that "duty for duty's sake" is a principle far more rigorously espoused in Prabhākara than in the Gītā.
74. SB (T), p. 153. RGM. p. 104.
75. RGM. p. 104 *na ca paroddeśa-pravṛtta-kṛti-vyāpti-arhatvam śeṣitvam-iti.*
76. VS (VB), p. 275, and no. 647.

77. Van Buitenen comments (*ibid*) that Rāmānuja here borrows from the *Prakaraṇa-pañcika*, where the analogy is used to illustrate the *niyoga-niyojya* (or *kārya* and *kartā*) relationship in Prabhākara thought. He clearly uses it with a slightly different intention.

78. Van Buitenen translates "operation."

79. SB (T), p. 153.

80. *Ibid.* As a translation of 'apūrva,' 'unprecedented' (Thibaut p. 154) is literal but misses the idea of unconditioned, independent potency of the effect intrinsic to properly performed ritual.

81. SB. (T), p. 153.

82. RGM. p. 104. *svarga-kāma-pada-anvita-kārya-abhidhāyī-padena-prathamam-api-ananya-arthata-anabhidhānāt.*

83. RGM. *ibid.* *sukha-duḥkha-nivṛtti-tat-sādhanebhyo' nyasya-ananya-arthasya kṛti-sādhya-tā-pratīti-anupapatteś-ca.*

84. SB (T), p. 155.

85. RGM, p.105. *yagader-agnyādi-devatā-antaryāmi-parama-puruṣa-samāvādhanā rūpatā : samārādhitā-parama-puruṣat-phala-siddhiḥ.*

86. VS (VB), pp. 254 - 267. Here Rāmānuja appears to be referring to the highest Person deliberately as "Nārāyaṇa" and "Viṣṇu", to emphasise the transcendent personal theism which was threatened by the Mimāṃsaka view of the ritual as possessing an intrinsically "transcendent" character.

87. VS (VB), p. 277 ff. esp. 281.

88. Corresponding almost exactly with Rāmānuja's own conclusion. See immediately below.

89. *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* V. 50, 97 and 30-16.

90. BG. 7.21-2. 9.24.

91. VS (VB) p. 154. *sarva-śak-tim-sarva-jnam-sarva-iśvara-bhagavantam-indra-ādi-devatā-antaryāmi-rūpeṇa-yāga-dāna-homa-ādi-vedodita-sarva-karmāṇām bhoktaram sarva phalānām pradātāram.*

92. VS (BV), p. 279, para. 124.
93. *op.cit* p. 281. viz., "In obedience to his command the wind blows, etc...being dependent on His will. When the Venerable Lord knows that someone follows his commandments, then he makes him prosper in his mercy for he knows and is capable of acting." Van Buitenen refers this to *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka, Upaniṣad* III. 8.90 - 10.

CHAPTER VI

1. This *pūrva-pakṣa* is set forth almost at the outset of *Sṛi-Bhāṣya* (SB (T), pp. 20-39) in considerable detail, and it is in reponse to this Advaita theory that Rāmānuja's own *mahā-siddhānta* is elaborated as the principal subject matter of I, i.1.—the *jijñāsā-adhikaraṇa*.
2. As by B.N.K. Sharma—*A History of the Dvaita School of Vedānta and its literature* (Bombay 1960) Vol. I. pp. 93, 126.
3. There is considerable divergence among interpreters of Sankara as to precisely in what sense *Vyāvahārika* reality to *pāramārthika* reality. Thus, e.g., S. K. Das (*op., cit.*) p. 132, Sankara's "absolute idealism is not at all at variance with absolute realism (*vastu-tantrata*)." Cf. D. G. Vol. I 438-9, "In reality all creation is illusory and so the creator also is illusory...the effect is but an illusory imposition on the cause a mere illusion of name and form the ultimate and absolute truth is the self...apart from us the individuals (the world) has no reality..." This unreality is not quite of the same kind of illusory character as in *prātibhāsika*. Sankara certainly denies the kind of idealism which equates objects with ideas of the objects, as in some schools of Buddhism. See his comment on Sūtra II. 2. 28, e. g., "Thing and idea are distinct." Nevertheless, he does state categorically and frequently that the empirical world of difference is not real in the sense that *Ātman* is real.
4. So Dasgupta (*ibid.* 486-7), classifying as "absolute," "practical" and "illusory."
5. Cf. Thibaut, *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXXIV, pp. XXXII-XXXIV Thibaut does, of course, note that "in a very

large number of cases the agreement extends (i.e., not only to the meaning of the text and its Vedic references but) to the interpretation to be put on those (Vedic passages and on the *Sūtras*." (p. lxxxvi). Thibaut sees this agreement as strong evidence of "an old tradition."

Thibaut concluded that while the Upaniṣads do not teach a distinct *nirguṇa* and *saguṇa-brahman*, nor the distinction between higher and lower *jñāna*, nor the doctrine of *māyā*, yet Sankara's system is best able to include the divergence of Upaniṣadic teachings (pp. Cii-Cxxv).

6. Cf. T.M.P. Mahadevan, *Gauḍapāda A study in Early Advaita* (Madras). Also Dasgupta (*op. cit.*, Vol. I. pp. 422-9). Also Radhakrishnan (*Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, pp. 452 - 65.)

7. GB (VB). p.l.n.i. also Ghate (*op. cit.*, p. 26.)

8. SB (T) pp. 125-6.

9. Cf. The interpretation of M. Sircar (*Comparative Studies in Vedantism*, 1927), p. 63). "Avidyā has an epistemological and a creative function. It screens our consciousness. It has individuating capacity." Cf. SBE (ST) Vol. I, pp. 344-5 and *passim*. Also Bhattacharyya (*op. cit.*, pp. 240-2.)

10. *anirvacanīya*-it can be called neither *sat* nor *asat*.

11. Radhakrishnan (*op. cit.*, p. 449.)

12. *op. cit.*, p. 471. Yāmuna, Rāmānuja other Vaiṣṇavas and later Vijñānabhikṣu, all see in Advaita some form of *pracchanna-bauddham*. Radhakrishnan appears to agree approvingly. "Though the accidents of its first immediate form disappeared, Buddhism became, partly through Sankara's influence, a vital force in the life of the country."

13. *op. cit.*, p. 351. Cf. note 3 *supra*.

14. Propounded by Nāgārjuna probably in the second century AD. A prominent feature being the view that all knowledge is relative, there being no enduring reality, either outward or inward. Hence the name *śūnya-vāda*.

15. *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* (London 1932) p. 369. But Hiriyanna bases his argument for the reality of Sankara's world on the distinction by Sankara of the world as it is (unreal) to the *jiva* and as it is to *Iśvara* (still an "appearance," but not distorted by *adhyāsa*.)
16. *op. cit.*, p. 371.
17. SB. I.i.1., as it relates to Advaita, esp. pp. 39 - 147 (SB (T)).
18. *op. cit.*, p. 107.
19. *op. cit.*, (Foreward) p. iii.
20. *Studies in Post-Sankara Dialectics* (Calcutta, 1936) pp. 23 - 4.
21. *Comparative Studies in Vedantism* (Madras. 1927) p. 3.
22. *Sūtra-bhāṣya*, I.i.1.
23. See note 15, *supra*. Thus Sankara on *Sūtra* I.i.4.— "all distinctions fictitiously created by Nescience." On *Sūtra* I.2.20.— "the whole practical world exists only in the sphere of Nescience." On *Sūtra* I.3.1.— "the universe of effects... is the mere product of Nescience." (Thibaut's translation).
24. In his introduction to the first *adhikaraṇa*. Thus: "It is wrong to superimpose upon the subject... the object and the attributes of the object, and vice versa to superimpose the subject and the attributes of the subject on the object thus coupling the Real and the Unreal." (*op. cit.*, pp. 3-4, Thibaut's translation).
25. SB (T), p. 38-9.
26. RGM. p. 61. *tan-mūla-bhūta-avidyā-nibarhanāya-nitya-suddha-buddha-mukta-svabhāva-brahma-ātma-ekatve-vidyā - pratipattaye*. Rāmānuja appears to be accurate in his description of Sankara's position, despite the charge by some Advaitins to-day that he is describing post-Sankara Advaita.
27. It appears to have been axiomatic for a great deal of Indian thought, certainly for Advaita, that the self should aim

for ultimate independence of all conditions. Thus *Manu-smṛti*, cited by Rāmānuja in *Vedārtha-saṃgraha* (VS (VB) p. 297) *sarva paravaśam duḥkam*. Rāmānuja claims that this only refers to the body, for "the soul's essence is that it should be subservient to another."

28. SB (T) 39 ff.

29. RGM. p. 61. Rāmānuja begins with *pramāna*-knowledge: *saviśeṣa-vastu-viśayatvāt-sarva-pramāṇānām*.

30. *Ibid.* *ātma-sākṣika-saviśeṣa-anubhavād-eva-nirastah*; 'idam aham-adarśam' iti kena cid viśeṣeṇa viśiṣṭa-viśayatvāt sarveṣām-anubhavānām.

31. SB (T).p.40. Generally used to indicate *sāstra* knowledge. Van Buitenen has an interesting note (VS (VB), p. 12 and on 34) on *Vāc* and *Brahman* in early thought. "*Vāc Brahman* it seems both stand for the powerfully creative word that creates a thing in its individuality by distinguishing it from the common stuff it is made of." *Śabda* does carry this creative significance to some extent in *Mīmāṃsaka*, but has become "informative" in a more "subjective" sense in *Vedānta*.

32. Perceived empirical experience, lit. what is presented to the eye. SB (T).pp. 41 - 2, 44 - 5.

33. Inference based on *pratyakṣa* and thus one further removed from it, SB (T), p.43. These three means of knowledge are accepted as authoritative in varying degrees by virtually all the schools making any claim to orthodoxy.

34. SB (T). pp. 40-1. RGM. p.61...*na nirviśeṣa-vastuni-śabdaḥ prāmāṇam*.

35. SB (T). p. 42f.

36. RGM p. 62. *viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣya-bhāva...atyanta-bheda-suvyaktaḥ*.

37. A traditional illustration for the intrinsically impossible.

38. SB (T), pp. 44 - 5.

39. Thus, e.g., Radhakrishnan (*op. cit.*, p. 677). "identity is a relation, and every relation requires two terms. If the terms are not distinct, they cannot be related. The relational view of thought is best adapted to the exposition of the nature of reality, since the real is a perfect system determined by and determining its contents."

40. *op. cit.*, p. 21. For the term "relational system" see also pp. 12-13.

41. Thus he argues on two fronts: against Sankara and Nyāya. Knowledge of *Brahman* is dependent upon revelation; but what is revealed and the means of receiving that revelation all indicate distinctions.

42. SB (T), pp. 48 - 50, 52, 55.

43. RGM. p. 64. *anubhūtitvam nāma vartamāna-daśāyam svasattayaiva svāśrayam prati prakāśamānatvam svasattayaiva svaviśaya-sāadhanatvam-vā.*

44. *tadhā' nubhūter-an-annbhāvyatva.*

45. VS (VB). p. 201. Rāmānuja asks the question "by what word (*śabda*) can you denote a pure, undifferentiated entity?" Advaita replies: "By the word *jñapti-mātra*."

46. *op. cit.*, p. 87. *viśeṣa-virahe siddhir-eva na syāt.*

47. SB (T). p. 56. For a useful description of Rāmānuja's teaching on consciousness and related concepts see Varadachari (*op. cit.*) pp. 50-63. On pp. 64-66 Varadachari attempts to show that Rāmānuja's teaching in many respects closely resembles that of Nicolai Lossky.

48. RGM. p. 67. *caitanya-svabhāvatā-hi svayam-prakāśatā.*

49. SB (T), p. 59. *guṇatva-vyavahāro nitya-tad-aśrayatva-tat-śeṣatva-nibandhana.*

50. *apṛthag-siddha.*

51. SB (T) p. 60.

52. *Jñāta eva.*

53. *samvit* here, but the various terms seem interchangeable.

54. SB (T), , p. 61.

55. RGM. p. 68. *anubhūtiḥ parama-arthato nir-viśaya nir-āśrayā ca sati bhrāntiyā jñātṛatayā vabhāsate.*

56. Advaita also took over the notion of the *upādhis*, or the constrictions resulting from the pure-self's involvement in—finitude, from Sāṃkhya. (See also on *infra*. on *Bhedābheda*). The 'substrate' (*āśraya*) is that continuing entity of which consciousness is necessarily related for its functioning, viz., the conscious-self. Consciousness is thus always attributive to the self, it is *dharma-bhūta-jñāna*.

57. SB (T), pp. 61-2. RGM. p. 68. *pṛthag-avabhāsamāna-eva-iyam anubhūtir artha-antaram-aham-artham viśiṣṭi.*

58. *daṇḍa-mātre, daṇḍi devadattaḥ*. The force of this point is clearer in the Sanskrit where Devadatta is described as a "stick-man."

59. RGM, p. 68. *tad-vata eva pratīteḥ.*

60. SB (T) p. 62. We shall later need to discuss the question of materiality and the soul's connection with it. Here Rāmānuja is merely pointing out that no principle, such as the *aham-kāra* postulated by Sāṃkhya and taken over by Advaita, which is itself part of nature can be responsible for differentiated existence characteristic of the self-conscious world, more than the body could be.

61. SB (T), pp. 63 - 7.

62. Ibid. p. 67. RGM. p. 70. *avasthita-padārtha-pratīty-anuguṇa-svabhāvyac-ca jñāna-tat-sāadhanayor- anugrahakasya-ca.*

63. SB (T), p. 67 ff.

64. E.g. Sankara on Sūtra I.4.18. 'It is the general Vedānta doctrine that at the time of deep sleep the soul becomes one with the highest Brahman...When scripture therefore represents as the object of knowledge that in which there takes place the deep sleep of the soul, characterised by absence of

consciousness and utter tranquillity, i.e., a state devoid of all those specific conditions which are produced by the limiting adjuncts of the soul, (etc)...the highest self is meant" (Thibaut's translation).

65. SB (T), p. 70. RGM. p.71. *pratyuta svarūpam-eva-aham-artha-ātmanah*.

66. SB (T), p. 78ff.

67. SB (T), pp. 73 - 76. This argument is developed by Rāmānuja in greater detail on pp. 117 - 124. A. Sengupta *op. cit.*, p. 40-51, has useful discussion of this epistemological issue.

68. SB (T), p. 117. It is not possible here to discuss adequately either Rāmānuja's *sat-khyāti* teaching or the seven *anupapattis* brought against Sankara's doctrine of *avidyā*. See DG. Vol. III, pp. 175 - 188. A Sengupta *op. cit.*, pp. 116 - 126.

69. SB (T), p. 121. *tasya satya-sankapasya-āścarya-śaktee-tathā-vidham kartṛtvam sambhavati-iti-artha*.

70. SB (T), p. 124.

71. RGM. p. 92. *bhagavat hi pareṇa brahmaṇā kṣetrājñā-puṇya-pāpa-anugrahaṁ tad bhogyatvaya-akṣhilaṁ jagat-sṛjata...*

72. *Ibid. sarva-sādhāraṇa-anubhava-viśayaḥ*.

73. *sat—in sad-eva-somya-idam-agra āsit*.

74. SB (T) p. 78. RGM, p. 74. *parasya brahmaṇo jagat-upādānatvam-jagan-nimittatvam*.

75. E.g., on Sūtra II.2.2—where he argues that creation by the unmoving Brahman can take place in so far as he becomes "fictitiously connected with *māyā*."

76. See also chapter IV *infra*.

77. SB (T), p. 79.

78. *Taittiriya-Upaniṣad*, II. I. 1.

79. RGM. p. 75. *na- nirviśeṣa-vastu siddhiḥ*.

80. *Ibid. aneka viśeṣaṇa viśiṣṭa-eka-artha-abhidhānav-yutpattiyā*.

81. *Ibid. tat-guna-virodhya-ākāra.....*

82. SB (T), pp. 80-102.

83. II. 1. 1. *so'anute sarvān karmān saha bhahmaṇā vipaścita*.

84. This is actually a parenthetical addition by Thibaut.

85. SB (T). 98 - 101.

86. VI. 7 - 30.

87. It should perhaps be emphasised that for Rāmānuja this is essentially a 'theological' concern, for in his view of *bhagavad-bhakta* relationship the whole macrosomic scheme is focussed in microcosm, in both cases the personal supreme Being determining the issue, requiring by virtue of his Being the bhakta's dependence on him.

88. The Advaitin seeks to eliminate all dependence of the soul on any conditioning factor. For Rāmānuja it is the soul's essence to be subservient.

89. Thus he quotes the *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* where *avidyā* is called *karman*. (SB (T) p. 101). This relates the outward condition of the soul ultimately to its own deeds, not to some deluding power external to it.

90. The seven objections. See note 68 *Supra*.

91. SB (T), p. 88.

92. RGM. p. 79. *kṛtsnasya cid-acid-vastu...pāramārthikasya eva-parasya brahmaṇas śarīrataya-rūpatvam*.

93. SB (T), p. 92. RGM p. 80. *jagat-kim-ātmaka? tasya-ca uttaram jagat ca sa iti*.

94. *Ibid. tādātmyam-antaryāmi rūpeṇa ātmatayā vyāpti kṛtam, na tu vyāpḥavyāpakayor-vastu-aikya-kṛtam*. Rāmānuja does not here mean to suggest that there is no substantial unity of any kind, for this is the clear implication of his teaching that Brahman is the *upādāna* of the universe, But he does deny that this implies a common "substance free from all difference" (SB (T), p. 93), for the consequence of such

a notion would be that "creation by *Brahman* is not something real, but something erroneously imagined." (*ibid.* p. 94.) And his argument here is that the *Purāṇa* bases its teaching about the *Brahman*-universe relationship on the doctrine of *Brahman* as Self of all. In fact, he later says that it is only this inner selfhood of *Brahman* who "enters into" his creation as *antaryāmin* that "all things possess their substantiality." For the "whole world different from *Brahman* derives its substantial being only from constituting *Brahman's* body" (*ibid.* 133 - 4. RGM, p. 97, *brahma-vyatiriktasya kṛtsnasya tac-charīratvena-eva vastutvāt-tasya prati-pādaḥ*). Moreover when thinking of the common substantiality of *Brahman* and his creation resulting from the *upādāna* notion, we must also bear in mind that for Rāmānuja substance always exists in relation to its accompanying attributes, and the universe forms just such an attributive relationship to *Brahman*, as does a body to its self. It really exists, but its reality is dependent.

95. SB (T), p. 93. RGM. p. 80. *jagat-ca sa iti sāmāna-ādhikaraṇyam jagad brahmaṇos-śarīra-ātma-bhāva-nibandhanam*

96. *op. cit.* pp. 130-138.

97. SB (T), p. 130 RGM. p. 96. *prakāra-dvaya-parityāge-pravṛtti-nimitta-bheda-sambhavena sāmāna-ādhikaraṇyam-eva parityaktam syāt; dvayoḥ padayor-lakṣaṇā ca.*

98. Cf. the discussion on this difficult topic by Van Buitenen (VS (B) pp. 59-65, who suggests Rāmānuja can take the meaning of *tat-tvam-asi* literally by using the body-self analogy in a macro-microcosmic harmony.

99. SB (T), p. 131.

100. *bādha-arthatve.*

101. SB (T) pp. 131-2.

102. *OP. cit.* pp. 132-4, RGM p. 96-7.

103. *prakāra-dvaya-viśiṣṭa eka-vastu. 'Primary denotation', mukhya-vṛttam.*

104. *jīva-antaryāmitvam.*

105. E.g., *śvetāsvatara-Upaniṣad* VI. 7 - 8.

106. SB (T), p. 133.

107. RGM. p. 97. *brahma-atmaka-jīva-anupraveśa-eva-sarveṣam-vastutvam-śabda-vācyatvam ca pratipāditam.*

108. RGM. p. 97...*śabdas-tat - paryantam-eva - sva-artham - abhidadhāti.*

109. This is one of the most radical points of difference between Rāmānuja and Sankara apropos *Brahman* and his transcendent relationship to the universe. As Sankara states at the outset of his *Bhāṣya*, *Brahman* is subject and real, the universe is object and unreal.

CHAPTER VII

1. E.g., Ghate, Dasgupta, etc.,

2. Some parts of this chapter, i.e., those dealing with the *abheda* aspect of this school, could be taken as a continuation of Rāmānuja's debate with absolute Advaita.

3. We noted that some scholars (eg., Dasgupta, Vol. I. pp. 486 - 7, Hiriyanna) distinguish three orders of reality *pāramārthika*, *vyāvahārika* and *prātibhāsika* in Sankara's teaching.

4. Dasgupta (Vol. I. p. 468) has a definitive description of the difference between *pariṇāma* and *vivarta*: "When the effect has a different kind of being from the cause it is called *vivarta*, but when the effect has the same kind of being as the cause it is called *pariṇāma*." Thus he rightly points out that Sankara teaches not *sat-kārya* but *sat-kāraṇa*.

5. Cf. Mahadevan, *op. cit.*, *passim*. Also D. G. Vol. I, pp. 422 - 9. "Gauḍapāda seems to be the most important man after the Upaniṣad sages, who revived the monistic tendencies of the Upaniṣads in a bold and clear form and tried to formulate them in a systematic manner...Sankara says that he was directly influenced by his great wisdom...He was possibly a Buddhist." (pp. 422.3). Dasgupta suggests that he may have

overlapped Sankara's life, "living till at least 800 A.D." But this seems unnecessarily late, although many of Dasgupta's other dates seems unnecessarily early.

6. VS (VB), p. 226.

7. *op. cit.*, p. 106. *aparimita-duḥkhasya pāramārthikatvāt-samsāriṇām anantatvena dustaratvāt-ca.*

8. Too many scholars seem to ignore this important distinction.

9. See DG. Vol. II pp. 43 - 4, where he acknowledges his dependence on Hiriyantha's paper on Bhāṭṭarprapanca's commentary on *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

10. Cir. 900 A. D. Dasgupta (*op. cit.*) (Vol. III) and P. N. Srinivasachari, (*The Philosophy of Bhedābheda*, 2nd edit. 1950) are principal external sources for Bhāṣkara's thought.

11. DG. (*op. cit.*, p. 44).

12. DG. VOL. III, p. 192ff.

13. *op. cit.*, pp. 1 - 2 4 - 5. See also Srinivasachari, *op. cit.*, pp. 55 - 56.

14. *op. cit.*, p. 6 Dasgupta refers to Bhāṣkara's Bhāṣya on Sūtras, II. 1. 27. and I. 4. 25. Nimbarka also held that it is Brahman's immanent *śakti* which produces creation; *kārya-ākāreṇa brahman pariṇamate, sva-asādhāraṇa śaktimatvāt*. Srinivasachari (*op. cit.*, p. 158). But he criticised *śakta* doctrine "in which creation is traced to *śakti*, external to *Īśvara*." (*op. cit.*, p. 180).

15. SB (T), 459 on II. 1. 15. Rāmānuja does, however, describe the world as the *śakti* of Brahman (as in *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*, etc.), Brahman being "that in which the power inheres." So SB (T), 564, on II. 3. 46. RGM. p. 275 *śakti-śaktimad-rūpeṇa*.

16. Whether Bhāṣkara took this Upādhic-doctrine direct from Sāṃkhya or adopted it from Sankara cannot be determined. Rāmānuja has a debate between Bhedābheda and Advaita on the Upādhis in I. i. 4. SB (T), pp. 191 - 197.

17. DG. Vol. III, pp. 193 - 4. *antaḥkaraṇa-upādhī-avacchinna*.

18. *op. cit.*, p. 214.

19. *op. cit.*, p. 194.

20. For a distinction between separable and inseparable relations, see Varadachari, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

21. DG. Vol. III, pp. 3 - 4 This is Bhāṣkara's general position in the *arambhaṇa-adhikaraṇa-Sūtra*, II. 1. 14 The effect-condition is said to be but a change in the state of the cause, which does not affect the continuing *reality* of the cause in the effect.

22. Srinivasachari, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

23. *op. cit.*, p. 17.

24. Most of these, or similar, analogies can be traced to the Upaniṣads. Others developed in the course of Vedāntic discussion. Probably none are Bhāṣkar's own, though there may be novel use in some cases.

25. *op. cit.*, p. 6.

26. *aṃśa* is not used to indicate numerically divisible 'parts' (for such *khaṇḍa* is used), but inherent elements of a substance which represent it but yet do not exhaust the whole. *anvaya-anvayin* has a similar connotation to *aṃśa-aṃśin*. Thus the doctrine that Brahman is indivisible can still stand.

27. E.g., vs (VB), p. 227. *ekasya-vastuno bhinnā-abhinnaṭvam viruddhatvāt*.

28. *op. cit.*, p. 221f.

29. The place of *ākāśa* in relation to other elements in the universe, or to Brahman, seems to have been of great importance to Indian philosophy. Sankara seems to have been the first to point out that the 'space' occupied by a jar (jug) is both similar to and different from primary *ākāśa* e.g., on *Sūtra*, II. 3. 3.

30. VS (VB) p. 222. It appears to correspond more to Sankara's use.

31. *op. cit.* pp. 222 - 3, para. 55. *brahmaṇyeva-upādhisam-sargaḥ kṣane bandha mokṣau*. Thus Rāmānuja tries to show that to prove difference and non-difference at the same time by this analogy is absurd. But he seems not to have given sufficient reason here for his objection.
32. *op. cit.* pp. 225 - 6. We deal with Yādava-prakāśa later in this chapter.
33. *op. cit.* p. 106. *iśvarasya tad svarūpeṇa tad-ātmya-varṇena-syād ayam doṣaḥ*.
34. *Ibid.* *nikhila bhuvana-niyama-adir-māha-ayam guṇa-gaṇaḥ pratipāditō bhavati*.
35. *op. cit.* p. 227, para 62.
36. Parentheses mine.
37. It must be admitted, however, that this redefinition does not seem to clarify immediately our understanding of the relation of *jāti* to its *vyakti*. It is not entirely clear from the final sentence here cited just how these two relate to the *prakāratva* in terms of which the redefinition is made. Presumably, by 'class,' etc., Rāmānuja does not mean 'class, individual, etc.', even though, at least in Van Buitenen's translation, this meaning could be assumed, and even though all these factors together may be thought to comprise the intrinsic structure of any given thing and could thus be called its 'modifications.' But that 'class' alone is said by Rāmānuja to be the *saṁsthāna* or 'generic structure' of a thing is seen more explicitly in SB I.i.1. (thus SB (T), p. 46 - 'Jāti is nothing but *saṁsthāna*.) As the sentence from Vedartha-saṁgraha cited above stands, Rāmānuja appears to define 'class' as the '*prakāra*' (translated 'modifying attribute') and 'individual' as '*prakārin*' (Modified thing'.) On the surface this may not seem to be the most obviously illuminating way to define the relationship of class to individual. Indeed, it may be thought that in the passage in Vedartha-Saṁgraha which follows, a different view of '*prakāra*' and '*prakārin*' is suggested. There, the staff of the '*dandīn*' (a classical illustration used long before in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika dialectic) is the '*prakāra*' of the man carrying it, and the man

carrying the *dandā* is the '*prakārin*.' It could be thought that the man should correspond more to 'class' (which Rāmānuja calls '*prakāra*') and his staff to 'individual' (which is called '*prakārin*.' But as we shall see, this need not be so, and at least in part, Rāmānuja's apparent lack of clarity is due to a misleading translation of *prakāra*, etc. Kumarappa appears to have been so misled by the translation 'mode' 'modify', implying as this does the idea of 'modification', or changing character (*vikāra*), that he actually equates the ideas expressed in the terms *prakāra* and *pariṇāma* (at the same time equating both with *viśeṣaṇa*). Thus, "the effect (is) nothing but a mode (here *pariṇāma*?) of the causal substance; the body also is nothing but a mode (*prakāra*) of the self. Hence it follows that all scriptural teaching with regard to Brahman as cause and the world as effect, or of Brahman as soul and the world as body imply in the end that Brahman is substance and the world His mode." or invariably co-existing as "substance and attribute, or subject and predicate." *op. cit.*, p.236. Hiriyanna makes a similar statement; Rāmānuja accepts the *pariṇāma-vada*...But it is the attributive elements (*viśeṣaṇa*) alone that change, for which reason the complex whole (*viśiṣṭa*) is also spoken of as undergoing modifications. The substantive element (*viśeṣya*) in itself is changeless...The changes that manifest themselves are known as *prakāras* or 'modes'." (*op. cit.* 402-3) Much of this section by Hiriyanna is splendidly clear and accurate. But such a simple equation of *pariṇāma* and *prakāra* must be taken exception to. Their relationship and the meaning of *prakāra* in Rāmānuja's thought is more subtle. For while Brahman ever includes his *prakāras*, only periodically do these *prakāras* become transformed into his *pariṇāma* state or *sthūla-avasthā*.

38. Thibaut translates "modes."
36. SB (T) pp. 135 - 8.
40. SB (T), p. 137. RGM p. 98. *saha-upalambha-niyamas tu-eka-sāmagri-vedya-tvanibandhana*.
41. *Op. cit.* p. 136.

42. RGM. *ibid.* *śarirāṇām-pi-ātma-eka āśrayatvam tad-eka-prayojanatvam tat-prakāratvam ca jāti-ādi tulyam.*
43. SB (T), p. 135. Thibaut's translation of this passage does not help easy understanding.
44. Some form of *sat-kārya*, and the denial that any effect quite discontinuous with its prior causal state can emerge, would seem to be quite inevitable given Rāmānuja's (properly Vedāntic?) view of *Brahman* as causal substance and inclusive reality.
45. SB (T), p. 136.
46. *Ibid.*
47. The inclusiveness of the determining factor whether substance, *karin*, *aṁsin*, *śeṣin* etc., is again basic to his position.
48. So para. 6?, VS (VB), p. 227. *prakārasya pṛthak-siddhy-anarthatvam pṛthag-anupālambhas ca.*
49. *op. cit.* pp. 228-9. Only the last four of the sixteen passages quoted are not actually from *śruti*.
50. In the *prakāra* sense here (not *parināma*).
51. Van Buitenen notes: "i.e., exists as a describable magnitude with a definite function."
52. Again, as the *prakāra* of the *śārīraka*.
53. *op. cit.* pp. 230 - 1, paras. 67 - 8.
54. Dasgupta, for example barely mentions its place in Rāmānuja's thought
55. i.e., the knowledge of the *prakārin* invariable in conjunction with, and the being of the *prakārin* inseparably co-existing with, that which he determines in his self-typification.
56. *Śārīra-śārīriṇos-ca-dharma - bhede'pi-tayor - asaṅkarāt* (*op. cit.* p. 108) Cf. Van Buitenen: "although (they) have different properties, they are not confused with each other."
57. *op. cit.* pp. 234-5.
58. *op. cit.*, pp. 113 *iśvara-prakāra-bhūta-sarva-avasthā...*

59. *Ibid.*, *tat-prakāra-viśiṣṭatayā-avasthite paramātmāni mukhyatayā variante.*
60. *Ibid.* *prakārṇi jīvātmani mukhyatayā variante.*
61. *Ibid.* *jīvātma-prahāratany-eva padārthatvāt.*
62. *Ibid.* *paramātmā-śārīratayā tat-prak-ratvāt.*
63. *op. cit.* p. 114 *ātma-śārīra-bhāvaḥ pṛthak-siddhy-ādharma-adheya-bhavo*
64. *Ibid.* *niyantṛ-niyamya-bhāvaḥ.*
65. *Ibid.* *śeṣa-śeṣi-bhāvsa-ca.*
66. *Ibid.* *prakāra-bhūtam iti-ākāraḥ śārīram.* Van Buitenen notes here that this is not mere facile play on similar sounds. For the root meaning of both '*prakāra*' and '*ākāra*' is "something built on a basis," suggesting their dependence on some "inner ensouling principle."
67. *Ibid.* *apṛthak-siddham.*
68. Though in neither case it is easy to see them as less than creative expressions of essential *Brahman*.
69. Along with the *apṛthak-siddha* idea, this desire to preserve the perfection and freedom of the supreme Being is the primary intention of the body-analogy. Thus I.i.1. SB (T), p. 88.
70. They are said to be 'without origination,' e.g., II. 3.18, *ibid.*, 541ff. But they are nevertheless "an effect," not self-existent being. And although they experience no "change of essential nature," such as material things do, the intelligence with which they are so intimately connected, is subject to changes of "expansion and contraction."
71. In such passages as on I. iv. 1.27 (*pariṇāmāt*). Rāmānuja comes as near to describing the *pralaya*-state in terms of complete non-differences as anywhere. The world in *pralaya* "assuming a form so subtle that it hardly deserves to be called something separate from *Brahman*, of which it constitutes the body, has become one with *Brahman*." (SB (T), p. 403). Then, later *cit-acid* are said to be "in so subtle a form that they may

be called non-existing; and as they are his body he may be said to consist of them (*tanmaya*)" (p. 405. Again *prakṛti* and *jīva* are "different from *Brahman*, although at the time of *pralaya*, they are one with *Brahman*, in so far as their extreme subtlety does not admit of their being conceived as separate" (p. 406). This teaching is said to indicate that "all changes exclusively belong to *acit*, and all imperfections and sufferings to the individual souls."

72. Rāmānuja sets clear limits to the *jīva*'s *Brahman*-like qualities or more correctly, potential qualities. Thus in IV. 4. 17 - 21, it is said that the "released soul, freed from all that hides its true nature...does not possess the power of ruling and guiding...animate and inanimate nature." (*ibid.* p. 766) Moreover, it is emphasised that even those qualities of essential nature which are possessed by the soul "fundamentally depends on the Supreme Person, and on him alone depends the permanency of those qualities; they are permanent in so far as the Lord himself on whom they depend is permanent." (p. 769) See final chapter, *infra*.

73. E.g., *op. cit.*, p. 478. (II. I. 34) Here *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* is cited to show that (at least in one sense) "the material cause (in the creation of new bodies) is constituted by the potentialities (meaning *karman*) of the beings to be created."

74. Thus *op. cit.*, p. 70.

75. DG. Vol. III, pp. 7, 10 (*muktaḥ kāraṇa-ātmanāṁ prāptaḥ tadvad eva sarva-jñāḥ sarva-śaktiḥ* (on IV. 4. 7) Bhāskara does not, however, admit *jīvan-mukti*).

76. *Ibid.*

77. *op. cit.*, p. 100.

78. VS (VB), p. 225 (p. 105) *jīva-brahmaṇor-bhedavad-abhedasya*.

79. *Ibid.* *īśvaraḥ svarūpeṇa...tad ātmakatva*.

80. *op. cit.*, p. 226.

81. SB II. 1. 15 - the *ārambhaṇa*. SB (T), p. 459 ff.

82. RGM. p. 237 *bhoktr-bhogyā-niyantṛ-r peṇa-aṁśa-traya-avasthām avatiṣṭate*.

83. SB (T), p. 462.

84. RGM. p. 238. *tasya sarva-ātmakatva-aṁśitva-upadeśa vyāhanyeran*.

85. *Ibid.* *vyavahārā—yogyatā hi sattvam*.

86. That action and being have the same character of reality follows logically from the arguments against Advaita and the *san-mātra* position as well as from his generally pragmatic viewpoint.

87. *Ibid.* *sarvatra-eka-rūpa sattā durupapādā*.

88. *Ibid.* *sarvasya-abhinnavte sarva-jñātvena sarva-svabhāva-prati-sandhānāt-sarva-guṇa-doṣa-sāṅkara-prasaṅgāś-ca*.

89. See final Chapter.

CHAPTER VIII

1. *Op. cit.*, p. 153. Despite these criticisms of Potter's analysis, this is a refreshingly original and philosophically able book.

2. *Op. cit.*, p. 103. It is surprising to find that Sankara is not among the three Advaitine listed.

3. The seven are: (1) 'Progress' or 'Leap' attitude in relation to freedom from the causal chain (Both Sāṃkhya and Rāmānuja are said to be 'progress' types, though later doubt is expressed about Rāmānuja's position. p. 251). (2) Cause-effect relationship. (Both are *satkārya vādins*). (3) Identity-difference relationship. (Both teach that difference exists really as a result of *pariṇāma* of the causal substance). (4) Whole-parts relationship (Both are said to teach that the whole equals the sum of the parts). (5) Epistemological viewpoint regarding knowledge of objects. (Both are said to advocate "conceptualism.") (6) Attitude to "negative reals." (Both deny such). (7) Estimate of "object of error" Both are *sat* or *yathārtha-khyāti-vādins*. To suggest such similarity in all

principal features is especially interesting in view of the fact that other scholars have seen greater fundamental agreement between Sankara and Sāmkhya, but we discuss this below.

4. Esp. *Śvetāśvatara*. Keith (*The Sāmkhya System*) pp. 5-22) argues that we need look no further than the Upaniṣads and not solely the later ones for the material origins of Sāmkhya.

5. Cf. e.g., Keith (*op. cit.*) p. 35 ff.

6. Cf. Zaehner, *op. cit.*, 139-141.

7. Cf. e.g., DG. Vol. III, chapter XXIII. In Vol. I. pp. 219-221, Dasgupta suggests that *śaṣṭi-tantra*, as described in the *Ahīrbudhnya-Samhita* of Pāṇcharātra, may have been an early form of Sāmkhya, essentially similar to Kapila. In this case "it has to be assumed that Kapila's Sāmkhya was theistic."

8. E.g., Van Buitenen (VS (VB), p. 191, n. 80 writes of "Rāmānuja's Sāmkhyān cosmogony." This is no doubt factually correct, but nevertheless misleading.

9. E.g., Zimmer, *Philosophies of India* (1951), p. 459.

10. The principal division among scholars concerns whether Sāmkhya was the doctrine of a distinct, independent school, perhaps with indigenous roots, or merely the development of cosmological speculation found in the scriptures themselves, and not systematised until much later, perhaps not long before Īśvarakrishna (AD, 300-400). A further problem relates to the origin of Yoga in connection with Sāmkhya. Is this an ancient technique (indigenous?) for attaining self-isolation, which at some later point became linked with Sāmkhya doctrine? Or do both arise out of single system (or approach to *mokṣa*-experience?) In general, the evidence would tend to suggest that as a distinct system Yoga is the more ancient, and that Sāmkhya the relatively late product of the systematising of speculation found in the Upaniṣads, made use of the Yogic technique to enhance its speculative claims for the passive character of pure Puruṣa. Thus it may be that Sāmkhya

only existed as a distinct system in Sāmkhya-Yoga form, though Sāmkhya style speculation may be traced in a variety of ancient systems, including Vaiṣṇava (Cf. also n. 11 below).

11. Though Kapila is said to be the founder of Sāmkhya, there is little evidence of his person and distinctive teaching. Dasgupta sees "three strata of Sāmkhya, first a theistic one, the details of which are lost but which is kept in a modified form by the Paṭanjali school of Sāmkhya, second an atheistic one as represented by Pāṇcaśikha, a third atheistic modification as the orthodox Sāmkhya system." (*op. cit.*, p. 221.) This omits the later Sāmkhya-yoga development (e.g., Vijñānabhikṣu in 16th century) which "attempted to minimise the distinction between the Sāmkhya and the theistic Vedānta." Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.* p. 256. Radhakrishnan follows Edgerton and others who see original Sāmkhya as "theistic." "It seems to be very probable that the earliest form of the Sāmkhya was a sort of realistic theism approaching the Viśiṣṭadvaita view of the Upaniṣads." (p. 253)

12. Vijñānabhikṣu spoke of Advaita as a "falsification" of true Vedānta.

13. *The Sāmkhya-Kārika of Īśvara Kṛishṇa* (1935), Ed., and translated by Suryanarayana Sastri.

14. Suryanarayana claims that in its "pre classical stages" Sāmkhya had "considerable affinities with Upaniṣadic doctrine," (cf. i.ii.) He goes on to say: "The Sāmkhya demonstration of the plurality of spirits applies properly to the materially constituted empirical selves, not to the pure unchanging Puruṣa." (p. XV. n. 26).

15. Radhakrishnan (*op. cit.*, p. 286).

16. Cf. n. 14, *Supra*. Richard Robinson suggests that a change from monism to pluralism came about as a result of the challenge of Pluralists like the Buddhists and Vaiśeṣikas. But even if some such change occurred, this does not seem an adequate explanation of it.

17. E.g., SB (T), pp. 354 - 407, 424 - 427 480 - 495. In this, of course, Rāmānuja follows the subject matter of the *Sūtras*.

18. VS (VB), p. 251.
19. *op. cit.*, n. 464.
20. SB. II. ii. 43. SB (T), p. 529 f.
21. SB II. ii. 1. SB (T), p. 480.
22. These two terms are synonymous. We retain the capital throughout, thus indicating its character as a primary cosmic principle.
23. Interpreted by B. N. Seal (Śīla) *Positive Science of Ancient Hindus*. (followed closely by Dasgupta) as "intelligible essence, energy and mass" Radhakrishnan (*op. cit.* p. 264), however, remarks that "to some Dr. Seal's clever attempt would seem not so much interpreting the Sāmkhya as rewriting it."
24. Rāmānuja's lack of confidence in reasoning alone as a valid *pramāṇa* is seen most explicitly in II. i. 12. "A theory which rests exclusively on arguments derived from human reasoning may at some time or place, be disestablished by arguments devised by people more skilful than you in reasoning. With regard to supersensuous matters scripture alone is authoritative, and reasoning is to be applied only to the support of scripture."
25. This is the first *Sūtra* in the 'seeing' *adhikaraṇa* I. i. 5-12. When the question of Sāmkhya is raised again in II. ii. 1 this anumāna - dependence of *Pradhāna* re-appears as the initial argument.
26. Rāmānuja refers to them in II. ii. 1, SB (T) p. 482. See *Sāmkhya Kārikā*, p. 15 - 16.
27. SB. i. 3, SB (T), pp. 161 - 174.
28. SB (T), p. 201.
29. *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*, VI. i. 46. It is here claimed that by means of the "one clod of clay," the "one nugget of gold," the "one pair of nail scissors"—all things made from these various substances can be known. (See Radhakrishnan, *Principal Upaniṣads*, pp. 446 - 7)

30. Cf. Van Buitenen (VS(VB), p. 234 n. 319) for Rāmānuja's position.

31. See later in this chapter. Īśvarakrishṇa (*Sāmkhya-Kārikā*, 9th) gives five arguments for the effect's latent existence in the cause. In brief they are: (1) The non-existent cannot be the object of activity and thus could never become existent. (2) No product consists of a material different from that of which it is made up (i.e., its material cause). (3) The effect must exist in the form of its material cause, or any thing could come out of anything. (4) Only that substance which has the necessary potency to produce certain effects is in fact causally efficient. (5) Cause and effect are of the same essential nature, e.g., as threads and cloth. Nevertheless, Sāmkhya does admit that cause and effect are distinct (*kāraṇa-kārya-vibhāgāt*, *Sāmkhya-Kārikā*, 15th). Hence the 'unilateral' relationship.

32. See e.g., D. G. Vol. I. pp. 254, 274 - 5. This concept of *Saha-kāri* plays a prominent role in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika

33. According to Vyāsa (cit 600 AD.), commentator on the *Yoga-Sūtra*, quoted by Radhakrishnan (*op. cit.*) p. 258.

34. SB (T) VI. 2. 1. ff.

35. SB (T), p. 201.

36. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

37. It appears more intrinsically probable that Īśvara, being the one perfect *mukta*-soul, was first introduced into Yoga as an aid to concentration rather than as a teleological explanation.

38. *op. cit.*, pp. 258 - 9.

39. SB (T), p. 202. RGM. p. 121. *kārya-anuṣṭhānaiva-kāraṇena-bhāvitavyam*: *Satyam*; *sarva-kārya-anuṣṭhāna - eva-sarva-jñāsa-sarva-śaktis-satya-sankalpaḥ-puruṣa-uttamās - sūkṣma-cid-acid-vastu-śārīrikah*.

40. SB (T), p. 207, I. i. 12.

41. SB (T) p. 354 ff.

42. I. 3. 11.

43. SB (T) p. 377, (I. iv. 15) RGM, p. 203. *avyākṛta-sarīram brahma*.

44. SB (T) p. 354. Cf. Radhakrishnan (*Principal Upaniṣads*) p. 625. This passage is probably the earliest Upaniṣadic account of cosmic evolution made use of by Sāṃkhya. In general, their citations are more from the two later Upaniṣads, Svetāsvatara and Maitri.

45. SB (T). pp. 355-6.

49. *Ibid* RGM. p. 194. *tasmād-api paras-sarva-antara-ātma-bhūto' ntaryāmi adhvanah pāra-bhūtaḥ parama-puruṣaḥ*

47. *op. cit.*, p. 358, SB I. iv. 2. ("Subtle, on account of its capability"- *Sūkṣman tu tad-arhatvāt*) RGM p. 195. *tad-arhatvāt-tasya-avyākṛtasya acid-vastunā eva-vikārāpannasya rathavat-puruṣa-artha-sādhana-pravṛtti-arhatvāt*

43. I. iv. 3 (*ibid*) (*tad-adhinatvāt* on account of its dependence on him).

49. P. 195. *parama-kāraṇa-bhūta-parama-puruṣa-adhinatvāt-prayojanavad bhūta-sūkṣmam*.

50. RGM p. 195. *svarūpa-sthiti-pravṛtti-bhedās teṣām na syuḥ*. (Thibaut reads "this dependence on the Lord as implied.") It could perhaps be argued that Rāmānuja somewhat overstates his case against Sāṃkhya here, in saying that Puruṣa and Prakṛti (*teṣām*) could have no distinction of "essential condition and function" (*teṣām* could possibly refer to Prakṛti and its evolutes, but they are not even supposed to contain such differences.) Rāmānuja's point seems to be that without some over-arching all-knowing, all-perfect, all-powerful will, there can not only be no proper explanation for the direction of cosmic evolution but also no ground for Puruṣa and Prakṛti being what they are supposed to be in the Sāṃkhya scheme.

51. SB I. iv. 16. SB (T), p. 377 ff.

52. IV, 19.

53. Rāmānuja later shows that the interpretation made by Sāṃkhya involves the "assumption of so-called implication (*lakṣana*)" i.e., referring to "the connexion of the soul with *karman*," rather than directly to the proper nature of the soul as it is in itself. This implication in *karman* has to be brought in by Sāṃkhya to explain how properly passive Puruṣa can in any sense take on a causal character.

54. SB II. i. 34. SB (T), p. 478.

55. RGM, p. 246 *pradhāna-kāraṇa-bhūta yato vai sṛjya-śaktayaḥ ; nimitta mātram muktā-eva na-anyat-kim-cid-apekṣate niyate-tapatam śreṣṭha svaśaktyā vastu vastutām*.

56. SB (T), p. 380.

57. SB (T), p. 490, II. ii. 5.

58. SB (T), p. 380 (I. iv. 16) RGM. p. 205 *karma-śabdo-kṛtsnasya-jagataḥ-kāryatva-vāci*.

59. *Ibid*. *na tasya puruṣan prati kartṛtvam upapadyate*.

60. SB (T), p. 487.

61. RGM. p. 250 *tac ca paramapuruṣa ārādhana tad viparyaya rūpe karmaṇi puṇya apuṇye tad anugraha nigrāhyatte ca tat phale sukhe duḥkhe*.

62. There are five such quotations in *Śrī-Bhāṣya*.

63. 18.46 ; 16.19.

64. SB (T), p. 488, RGM, p. 250. *tad upasamhāra-artham-ca-antara - ātmatayā 'nupraviśya - anumantṛtayā ca niyacc-hamstiṣṭati*.

65. SB, II. ii. 5. SB (T), p. 490. *niṣ-kriyasya*.

66. *Ibid*. *sannidhāna-mātrasya nityatvena-nitya-sarga-prasaṅgaḥ*

67. E. g., SB. I. iii. 4. SB (T), p. 299 *bhogyā-bhutayā-ptakṛtyā...jīvaḥ*. Thus Kumarappa concludes that Prakṛti "is evil in the sense that it is the principle of pleasure and pain meted out to a soul bound to worldly existence as the result of

its acts." (*op. cit.*, p. 240). He goes on to suggest that "what significance Prakṛti has is entirely in relation to the release of souls." (p. 245, in connection with I. iv. 10 (SB (T) p. 370 "Prakṛti is the causal substance of the entire material universe, and constituting the means for the final release of all intelligent souls which are connected with it from all eternity.") But if this is Prakṛti's role in relation to the souls and their release, especially if it can be said to be subordinate to the good will of the Supreme Person who uses it for these ultimate ends, Prakṛti can hardly be described as "evil."

68. *op. cit.*, p. 278.

69. *op. cit.*, p. 312-314. In II. ii. 9, SB (T), pp. 492-5, there is a final, more systematic attempt to refute Sāṃkhya's view of *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* and their inter-relationship. But among the ten arguments enumerated most of the more important have been touched on elsewhere.

70. SB. II. i. 4-14, SB (T). pp. 413-430.

71. SB (T), p. 415. RGM p. 220, *vilakṣṇayor hi-kārya-kāraṇa-bhāvaḥ pratipādayitum eva na śakyate*.

72. *Ibid. na tāvat-sarva-dharma-sārūpyam*.

73. SB (T), p. 416.

74. SB (T), p. 417, SB II. i. 6 - "But it is seen."

75. These somewhat quaint illustrations were originally used to attempt to prove *a-sat-kārya*.

76. *op. cit.*, p. 418. SB II. i. 7. RGM. p. 221. *asata eva jagata-utpattiḥ*.

77. *Ibid. na tu kāranāt kāryasya dravya-antarātvam*. The consequence of this position would seem to be that "anything might originate from anything", obviously a position to be carefully though not easily avoided by the *a-sat-kārya-vādin*.

78. SB (T), p. 419. SB II, i. 8. *apitau* is the term here used for "re-absorption", usually 'pralaya'.

79. SB (T) pp. 419 - 20. RGM. p. 222. *pṛthivyādi-bhūta-saṅghāta-viśeṣaḥ*.

80. *Ibid. na ca bhoga āyatanatvam śariratvam*.

81. We may refer back to I. ii. 8, SB (T), p. 265, where Rāmānuja distinguishes between the mere fact of embodiment and subjection to the pleasure and pain resulting from *karman*.

82. SB (T), 426. RGM. p. 224. *Brahmaṇas saśarirātve tasya bhoktṛtva*.

83. SB (T), p. 428.

84. RGM. p. 225. *krama-bandha-vinirmuktasya-āvirbhū-tasya-svarūpasya-saśarirasya-eva puruṣa artha gandhabhāvāt*.

85. SB (T), p. 428.

86. In II. i. 8. SB (T), p. 421. RGM. p. 222. *yad-icchā-adhina-svarūpasthiti-pravṛtti-yat-tattasya śariram iti*.

87. SB (T), p. 424.

88. SB (T), p. 421. (*śeṣa*)

89. SB (T), p. 423.

90. RGM. p. 223 *atyanta-vilakṣaṇa-ākāreṣu-dravyeṣu*.

91. SB (T) p. 424. RGM p. 223. *yasya cetanasya yad-dravyam sarva ātmanā svarthe niyantum dhārayitum ca śakyam, tat-śeṣatā-eka-svarūpam ca, tattasya śariram-iti*.

92. It is noticeable how many features of theistic Sāṃkhya Madhva incorporated into his system, the most significant being his distinction of efficient cause (*Brahman*), material cause (*Prakṛti*), and instrumental cause (*śakti*).

93. As in the Sūtra I. iv. 23.

94. SB (T), p. 398. RGM. p. 212 *kāraṇam eva-avasthā-antarāpannam kāryam na dravya antaram*

95. SB (T). p. 399. *brahma vyatirikta-vastu-antara abhāvāt*

96. SB (T). pp. 400-1.

97. SB (T). p. 399.

98. SB (T), p. 400. No account is given here of the important *Pariṇāma-sūtra* which follows—I. iv. 27. The “essential nature” of the *pariṇāma* process is that this does not “introduce imperfections into the highest *Brahman*” (p. 402). Then following the use of *līlā-bhāva* as a further means of accounting for this constant immutability of *Brahman*, Rāmānuja eventually concedes that the *pariṇāma* into effected states, in which he remains as the continuing self of the effected states (p. 405) must also affect *Brahman* in some way though it is in a non-essential way. Thus still claiming that suffering is limited to *cit* and change to *acit*, he suggests that “the Self is effected in that sense only that it is the ruling principle; and hence the self of matter and souls in their gross or evolved state.” And so “consisting of unlimited knowledge and bliss he forever abides in his uniform nature, engaged in the sport of making this world go round.” (p. 406).

CHAPTER IX

1. *op. cit.*, Chapter XIV

2. Seven such comparisons are made in the course of the chapter. (1) The *nirvikalpa-savikalpa* knowledge distinctions. (2) The *dharmabhūta-jñāna* concept. (3) The substance-attribute relation. (4) *aprthak-siddhi samavāya*. (5) Six kinds of *dravya* are seen in Rāmānuja's system, suggesting a similarity to Vaiśeṣika *dravyas*. (6) *Kāla* in both. (7) *Videha-mukti* in both. Ninian Smart's comparative table of “religious factors” however, (*Doctrines and arguments*, p. 130) would suggest on a superficial reading that Nyāya Vaiśeṣika shares all Viśiṣṭādvaita's features (except the *bhakti* pre-dominance). But although at one point Smart suggests a certain ontological similarity between these two as against Advaita, his general evaluation of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika is that many of its ‘religious’ ingredients appear to have been incorporated late in its development. It could be said, of course, that this late conversion to theism hardly affects Rāmānuja's relationship to the system, as he only had direct experience of its later form.

3. See e.g., A. Bhattacharya, *op. cit.*, p. 12 “In the history of Indian thought the Naiyāyikā conception of the subject-object relation has been unhesitatingly accepted”. Such a generalisation clearly requires some qualification.

4. Some of the arguments in *Śrī-Bhāṣya* were already part of the Vaiṣṇava Vedāntic tradition previous to Rāmānuja, and were included in Yāmuna's *Siddhi-traya*, and perhaps in Nāthamuni's *Nyāya-tattva*. DG. Vol I., pp. 285-294, 310-330. Also G. Bhattacharyya, *Studies in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika Theism* (Calcutta 1961).

5. The following statement by G. Bhattacharyya should, however, also be noted: “Kanāda's atheism has been set forth as a conceptual figment of later scholasticism”. *op. cit.*, p. 163. He claims that the logic of the Vaiśeṣika's position makes “the assumption of God... a metaphysical necessity” and that argument from silence is unconvincing, especially as there is no repudiation of theism either (nor any argument for the *jīva*). Moreover, he holds that for later members of the school to introduce God “would be an unwarranted and irrelevant interpolation.” But although Bhattacharyya has a good discussion of theism in later Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikā, his argument for Kanāda's theism is hardly convincing.

6. N. Smart, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

7. DG. VOL. I. p. 320.

8. *Kāraṇa Sāmagiri* i. e., the aggregate of causal factors sufficient to bring about a new effect.

9. SB (T), pp. 161-173.

10. *Ibid.* p. 163

11. RGM. p. 107, *eka-cetana adhinam*.

12. SB (T) p. 162.

13. RGM. p. 107. *nanu ca jagatah kāryatvam tad upādāna-upakaraṇa-sampradāna-prayojana abhijñā kartṛkatva-vyāptam*.

14. *śākṣāt-kāra-sāmarthyam*.

15. SB (T), p. 170. RGM. p. 110 *vilakṣaṇa-kārya-hetutva sambhavāt tad atirikta-atyanta-adṛṣṭa*—infinite merit.

16. *op. cit.*, p. 164 ff.
17. *op. cit.*, p. 165.
18. *op. cit.*, p. 165 ff.
19. *op. cit.* p. 166. RGM, p. 108 *kāryatvena-anumate' pi viṣaye jñāna-śakti kārya-anumeye*. The argument here concerning the effected character of a thing is based on its being comprised of parts *sa-avayava-viṣaya*. The world must be an effect, says the Nyāya-vādin, because it consists of parts. Most other schools would accept this.
20. *op. cit.*, p. 167.
21. RGM. p. 109.
22. SB (T) pp. 168 - 9.
23. RGM. p. 109. *aśariraḥ samkalpa - mātra - sādhanapariniṣpanna - ananta-vistāra - vicitra - racanā - prapañcaḥ Iśvaro' numānaiva-siddhyati*.
24. SB (T). pp. 169 - 173.
25. *op. cit.*, p. 170.
26. RGM. p. 110. *eka-kartṛkatva-sādhane, (Buddhimad-eka kartṛkatve sādhye)*.
27. RGM, (*Ibid*). *kāryatvasya-anaika-āntyam*.
28. RGM. (*Ibid*). *pakṣasya-aprasiddha-viśeṣaṇavam*.
29. *Ibid*. *sādhyā-vikalatā-ca dṛṣṭāntasya; sarvanirmāṇa-caturasya-ekasya aprasiddheḥ*.
30. SB (T), p. 172.
31. RGM. p. 111. *sa kim savyāpāro nirvyāpāro vā*.
32. *Ibid*. *darśana-anuṅyena Iśvara-anumānam darśana-anuṅya parāhatam-iti*.
33. *Ibid*. *sakala-itara - pramāṇa - paridṛṣṭa - samasta-vastu visajātātīyam...*
34. See e.g., DG. Vol. I, pp. 203 - 6. Cf. also the Nyāya-Mimāsaka debate as recorded in *siddhi-traya*.
35. On *Sūtra*. I. i. 2 - Thibaut's translation, p. 17.

36. *op. cit.*, p. 19.
37. In particular, Śrīdhara and Udayana (10th to 11th centuries AD.) were teaching in a markedly theistic style in the period just prior to Rāmānuja. See G, Bhattacharyya, Chapter V to VII, *passim*. We may note especially Śrīdhara's answer to the question of whether agent-hood (*sakartṛkatva*) is synonymous with embodiment (*śarīratva*). He is eventually prepared to concede that this is so, but claims that "God has no other physical body except the atoms which are the ultimate cause of the world." (*op. cit.*, pp. 84 - 5.)
38. II. i. 8.
39. Even the Vaiśeṣika-Sūtras tacitly admit the Vedas as a *pramāṇa*. DG. Vol. I. p. 332.
40. E.g. SB (T), p. 168.
51. Reputed by tradition to be the author of the Vaiśeṣika-Sūtras, which Dasgupta dates as Pre-Buddhist. While Vaiśeṣika itself may have originated in pre-Buddhist times, it seems unlikely that the teaching of this school could have reached Sūtra-form so early. In any case Rāmānuja was probably taking contemporary Kaṇāḍa disciples as opponents, rather than the Sūtras as such.
42. SB (T), pp. 430-467.
43. E.g., DG. Vol. I, pp. 258, n.l., 468.
44. SB (T), p. 430. RGM. p. 226. *na-kāraṇāt-kāryasya-ananyatvam sambhavati*
45. *op. cit.*, pp. 430 - 1. *Kāraṇameva cet-kāryam kim kāraka-vyāpāra-sādhya-syāt*
46. *anabhivyaktam...abhivyajyate*
47. RGM. p. 227. *asataḥ kāryasya-utpatti-hetutvenaiva-kāraka-vyāpāra-arthavattvam*.
48. *Ibid*. *Kāraṇa-śakti-niyamād-eva tad upapattēḥ*
49. SB (T), pp. 453 - 9.
50. *op. cit.*, p. 453. RGM. P. 235 *parama-kāraṇad-brahmaṇa-ananyatvam jagataḥ...*

51. *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*. VI. 1. 4.
52. II. i. 15—*tad-ananyatvam-ārambhaṇa-śabdādi bhyah*
53. SB (T), p. 455. RGM. p. 235. *atas-tasyāiva...dravyasya samsthāna-antara - bhaktva-mātreṇa - buddhi - śabda-antarādaya-upapadyante*.
54. Sankara does of course teach the origination of the world from *Brahman*. But in so far as this inevitably exists in its *nāmarūpa* form, its origination is in conjunction with *māyā*. It is thus neither being nor non-being, and not *paramārthika*. Rāmānuja says: *utpatti-abhyupagame 'pi sat kārya-vādo-na virudhyate; sata eva utpatteh* (RGM. p. 235)
55. *vividha - vicitra-sthira - trasa - rūpa-jagattvena - ātmano-bahu-bhavanam* (p. 236)
56. While Vaiśeṣika considers the ātman to be all-pervasive, Rāmānuja regards it as atomic in nature (*aṇutva*) but able to animate the whole body by its influence. All-pervasiveness is a *Brahman* quality not shared by the soul. See e.g., DG. Vol. I. pp. 238, 363.
57. SB (T), pp. 457 - 8. Rāmānuja here brings in his *prakāra* concept again.
58. SB (T), p. 464 - 6.
59. The *nāma-rupa* state indicates that condition of distinguishable multiform individuality which succeeds the non-individuated state of *pralaya* or *sūkṣma-avasthā*, and which results from the creative action of the Supreme Being, who acts in accord with the requirements of the souls implicated in the karmic process he himself has determined.
60. II. i. 19 - 20.
61. RGM. p. 240. *vāyur-eka-śarīra vṛtti-viśeṣam-bhajamāṇaḥ nāma-rūpakārya-antaraṇi bhajate*.
62. We may note that the Nyāya notion of *avayava-avayavin* shows corresponding dissimilarity to Rāmānuja's view-point. See A. Bhattacharyya *op. cit.*, pp. 138 - 145 and the note following.

63. Again we see their conflicting view of parts and whole. For Rāmānuja, *Brahman* understood as the 'whole' is the point of reference for determining how the constituent 'parts' are related. This position seems to preserve for Rāmānuja both the real and integral character of the universal whole, and also the substantial dependence of all the 'parts' upon the being of *Brahman*, and thus his supremacy in every way. This ontological viewpoint corresponds exactly with the organic analogy.

64. II. ii 11 SB (T), p. 496. RGM. p. 254. *nikhilajagad-utpatti-kāraṇa bhūtam parama aṇu-gatamādyam-karma-adṛṣṭa-kāritam*.

65. SB (T), p. 497.

66. RGM, *Ibid.* *na ca iśvara-icchā...*

67. This follows the subject matter of the sūtra (II. ii. 12) itself.

68. RGM. p. 255. *apṛthak sthiti...apṛthak-siddhatvam*

69. The emergence of consciousness is explained by this school in a generally similar way, i.e., by *sannikarṣa* or *samyoga* (*con-presence*) of the subject, or its senses, and the object. Consciousness is said thus to form the new phenomenon of the relationship of these two. For Rāmānuja, as we have seen, consciousness is the attributive function of a self-conscious subject, and thus lists in inseparable connexion with it. But despite this divergence it may in general be said that Rāmānuja's view of the subject-object relation is probably more indebted to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika than to Sāṃkhya.

70. *op. cit.*, pp. 409 - 10.

CHAPTER X

1. *The Theology of Rāmānuja*, esp. Chapt. 5
2. Eg. VS(VB), paras. 20, 26.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 196. Cf. Carman, *op. cit.* p. 124.
4. See Chapter on Bhedābheda and note 37.
5. I. 1. 13. SB(T) p. 227. Cf. Carman, *op. cit.* pp. 126-7.

6. Fr. R. V. De Smet argues (e.g. in *The Correct Interpretation of the Definitions of the Absolute according to Śaṅkarācārya and Saint Thomas Aquinas* (Philosophical Quarterly, XXVII, 1955, 4) that Śaṅkara's use of *lākṣaṇa* is similar to the *analogia entis* (analogy of being) of Aquinas and that the *tādātmya* of Śaṅkara's thought is not pure identity. It is a unilateral, not a reciprocal relationship.

7. Cf. Lacombe (*L' Absolu selon le Vedanta*), p. 73, 106, also p. 106 - "in autonomy and differentiation ...there is an authentic participation in the absolute"

7a. VS para 82.

8. *op. cit.*, Chapt. 6. Also on pp. 255-6: Rāmānuja "generally differentiates between God's essential nature in the strict sense (*svabhāva*), which is often identified with the Lord's auspicious qualities (*kalyāṇagunah*) .(This) indicates the metaphysical priority of the five defining attributes of the Supreme Self, which express God's essential nature to be infinite and joyous self-consciousness that is eternally real and flawless. This priority stems from the fact that these attributes refer to God's nature as He exists in Himself, without reference to any other entity. All the other qualities pertain to God's relations to other entities. In addition to His personal "auspicious qualities" God possesses a unique bodily form, a transcendent abode, and a finite realm manifesting His glory.....(But while it is possible to distinguish these other aspects of the Divine nature (*svabhāva*) from the Divine essence (*svarūpa*), it is not legitimate to try to separate them or put the other aspects on a lower level of reality. When Rāmānuja wants to make this quite clear, he expands the concept of *svarūpa* to include these other aspects of the Divine nature as well." Carman goes on to compare favourably this *svarūpa* concept of Rāmānuja's with the Christian concept of God in Himself apart from His creation. The other 'aspects' of God's nature are also seen as corresponding to similar concepts in Christian thought. Only "the superlatively beautiful form of the Lord in His supreme estate" has "no close Christian parallel".

9. SB (T) p. 262. Also more fully in II. 1. 9. and VS para. 76.

10. VS (VB) pp. 297 - 9.

11. *The Philosophy of Śrī Madhvācārya* (Bombay 1962) pp 16 - 17. Cf. also S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 682, 716.

12. Thus, eg. Karl Barth, the Christian theologian most committed to the idea of God's otherness. In some of his later writings he acknowledged a kind of divine 'concurrence' with man. Eg. *Church Dogmatics* III. 3. sect. 48 - 9. However, in Barth's writing as a whole there is paradoxically, both a dualistic and an idealistic tendency, and consequently a serious lack of substantiality in the created status. He cannot accept any form of the *analogia entis*, though he does write of an *analogia relationis* and *operationis*. Much more characteristic is his insistence on the *analogia fidei*, in which "the divine and the creaturely subjects are not alike or similar...Their basis and constitution as subjects are absolutely unlike" (III. 3. 102-3). As mentioned above, in his later writings, Barth tried to modify Kierkegaard's declaration of an 'absolute and infinite qualitative difference' between God and his creation.

13. So the more radical 'secular' theologians, many of whom claim a Barthian theological ancestry.

14. The question of *creatio ex nihilo* will be considered later, though briefly. We may note Pringle-Pattison's criticism of all conceptions of creation as "an act of bare will, and the world as a mere effect," as being "Quasimagical" (*Idea of God*, p. 307). He also claims that efficient causation alone is not adequate for any understanding of spiritual, personal being (p. 315).

15. *Indian Philosophy*, pp. 530-1.

15a. Cf. William Temple's discussion of the relation of transcendence and immanence in God (*Nature, Man and God*, esp. 294 - 7) Eg. "Behind...the successive moments of conduct in which personality is immanent, there is personality itself, transcendent and, in proportion to its completeness of integration, unchangeable." Temple, however, ridicules the idea of the universe as God's body, quoting Pope's couplet: "All are

but parts of one stupendous Whole, Whose body nature is, and God the soul" (pp. 282 - 3).

15b. SB I. 4. 27.

16. Cf. Carman, *op. cit.* pp. 129 -132.

17. SB II. 1.5, II. 1.23.

18. Eg. SB I.4.22.

19. SB II. 1.14.

20. SB L. 1.2.

21. Thibaut's translation (SB(T) pp. 261-2) of *ādheyam*, *vidheyam*, *śesabūtam*, *Ādheya* can mean 'grounded in' or even 'contained in'. *Āśraya* has similar meaning to *ādhāra*, emphasising even more the idea of 'basis of security'. 'place of abiding for refuge'. (Cf. Carman, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-5)

22. Cf. K. C. Varadhachari, *Śrī Rāmānuja's Theory of Knowledge*, (Appendix II)

23. VS(VB) pp. 64.5.

24. Also SB I. 1.13, SB(T) pp. 227-8. Again we may note the significant development in western theology of that system referred to variously as Process theology, theology of Organism Pan-en-theism, Surrelativism (or the Supremely Relative Deity), Dipolar theism (i.e., the abstract and concrete aspects of God). A.N. Whitehead's metaphysical system, expressed in highly technical terminology in *Process and Reality*, is the original inspiration of much of his thought. After Whitehead, Charles Hartshorne has been the chief proponent, though he has avoided the florid metaphysical style of Whitehead. In his earlier books *Man's Vision of God*, and *The Divine Relativity* Hartshorne worked out his idea of God's being as all-related and all-inclusive. Thus "Panentheism agrees with traditional theism on the important point that the divine individuality, that without which God would not be God, must be logically independent, that is must not involve any particular world (as against the pantheism of Spinoza). The distinction between the individual and state, or personality and experience (elsewhere Hartshorne uses the self-body analogy) enables us to combine this point of theism with the equally necessary point of traditional

pantheism that God cannot in his full actuality be less or other than literally all-inclusive." Thus God incorporates every aspect of universal existence, every stage of the cosmic process, within his supreme Being. This inclusiveness is the basis of God's supremacy for the Panentheist. An immutable, entirely unrelated absolute is a pure abstraction. But there is an "absolute" aspect of God's being. "God, in his relative aspect, is the only unqualifiedly inclusive being, as in his absolute aspect, he is the only unqualifiedly exclusive one" (90-94). Hartshorne's basic method is to follow a *via eminentia*-attributing to God in a "categorically superior" form the qualities and values found in our analysis of human experience. The principal question to be asked of such a method is whether all the characteristics and contemporary values of human experience have to be utilised to describe the nature of God. Does this allow a sufficient place to the divine (self) revelation, to transcendent aspects that may not be reflected in contemporary human values?

25. Van Buitenen uses the micro-macro analogy for describing Rāmānuja's thought in a very striking manner. But others have used it of Indian thought generally. Eg. A. Danielou in *Indian Polytheism*.

26. As do many critics of Rāmānuja. Eg. R. V. De Smet in *Religious Hinduism*, S. R. Bhatt in *Studies in Rāmānuja's Vedānta* (i.e. that his thought is 'anthropo-morphic').

27. SB (T) p. 4. *brahma-śabdena ca svabhāvato nirastanikhila-doṣa anavadhika - atīśayam-asāṅkhyeya - kalyāṇa - guṇagaṇaḥ puruṣottama abhidhiyate*, etc.

28. SB II. 1. 9 (Cp. I. 22 and VS (VB) para. 76).

29. VS (VB) paras. 121-2.

30. Cf. Van Buitenen, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17. There are, of course, passages where Rāmānuja refers to the *atyanta-heya*, or completely foul nature of materiality, but this is merely to stress the contrast with the infinitely pure, essential nature of God (eg. SB II. 1. 23). Radhakrishnan (*op. cit.* p. 717) refers to Rāmānuja's comment on I. 1. 13 (*svaśarīra-gata-bālatva-yuvatva*

sthaviratva-ādāyo jivam na spṛśanti) that the *jīva* is not affected by the changing states of the body thus: "It is naturally pure... Materialisation is but an accident which can be shaken off. This materialisation is the product of sin, but the pure soul cannot sin. So sin cannot be without the embodied soul, and there can be no embodied soul without sin." Rāmānuja's thought is not without some ambiguity on this issue, but he certainly does not take materialisation as lightly as is suggested by the second sentence here quoted. It is precisely because he takes it seriously that he argues for *videha-mukti* as against *jīvan-mukti*. And the ambiguity is in fact intrinsic to the *Gīta*, it is not Rāmānuja's own invention.

31. II. 3. 40 - 1.

32. It is true that Rāmānuja did not make the *kainkarya-dāsatva* (servanthood) idea as explicit in his major writings as in the *Gadya-traya*. But the idea is implicit throughout (as we argued in the first chapter), especially in view of his *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva* and its interpretation.

33. Rāmānuja did not himself use the term, though both words are used separately. The distinction of *līla-vibhūti* as God's self-manifestation in creation, and *nitya-vibhūti* as his transcendent self-manifestation in heaven, is suggested in Pañcārātra and was brought out by the later commentators. But it is not difficult to find a similar distinction in Rāmānuja's *līla* concept in his comment on SB II 1. 33, as well as in the *Vibhūti-yoga* passages in the *Gītā-bhāṣya* (ie. Chapt 10.) Then in his introduction to the *Gītā*'s tenth chapter he writes of the Supreme Person as "quite distinct in nature from this *vibhūti* of his... since he utterly transcends it in excellence." His comment on *Gītā* 15.6, on *Vedārtha-saṃgraha* para. 6 and some passages in *Gadya-traya* are also relevant.

In a number of passages *līla* refers to God's creative realm of power, and *vibhūti* to his transcendent realm of power. Eg. VS para. 112, SB IV. 4. 19.

34. Carman, *op. cit.* 146. His whole discussion of *vibhūti* (140 - 6) is most useful.

35. Eg. SB I. 3. 7.

36. In I. 1. 1, SB (T) p. 136, Rāmānuja states that the soul is the *prayojana* of the body, in that bodies "exist to the end that the fruits of the actions of the self may be enjoyed." There is an interesting description of a *mukta* in SB LV. 4. 19 (SB (T) p. 768): "The worlds which are subject to change form parts of the soul's experience, in so far as they form parts of *Brahman*'s manifestation (*vibhūti*). The same idea of the universe manifest as part of *Brahman*'s *vibhūti* is repeated.

37. Cf. previous section above.

38. R. C. Zaehner (*At Sundry Times*) comments (pp. 129-130) on Rāmānuja's *Gītā-bhāṣya* passage (*mama tu tair-na kiñcit-tadha-vidha-upakāraḥ, kevala-līla-eva prayojanam-iti-arthaḥ*, RGM p. 65) thus: "There is no purpose in creation... man is simply hurled into the "wheel of *Brahman*", a blindly operating mechanism from which he must at all costs escape..." Zaehner then conceded: "the game, however, is worth playing, for by involving man in matter God kindles a deep longing in the soul not only for release from this world but re-union with himself." In his later book on the *Gītā* Zaehner seemed to be a little less negative in his exposition of the *līla* concept.

39. SB (T) pp. 488 - 9, II. 2. 5.

40. II. 1. 32 - 3.

41. F. R. Tennant (*Philosophical Theology*, Vol. I, esp. pp. 115 - 7) made a searching analysis of the concept of purpose and the dilemma it poses for the theist. Though he was not himself a theologian of 'Organism,' he conceded that if it is possible to conceive of purpose at all without the limitation of temporal stages, etc, "then the purposefulness of the world will consist in its being an organic system, or one in which the natures and inter connexion of the parts are determined by the whole, and its being an expression of intelligence but not the actualisation of a pre-existent plan. According to this attenuated conception of purpose the relation of means to end, generally involved in human purposefulness, also vanishes. The element of value, of desire and satisfaction, is not eliminable from the idea of purpose... In whatever sense the world may be said to

embody divine purpose, the least that can be said is that the world contains what is of worth to the Supreme Being."

We may compare the writings of those more committed to the idea of an 'organic system'. For example, S. Ogden (*The Reality of God*), in attempting to explain the significance of God's 'special acts' as distinct from his action in all historical events. He suggests that 'primary human acts' are those inner acts in which the self constitutes itself as self. Public acts of word or deed are but bodily, secondary ways of expressing those primary acts. Thus some of these 'secondary acts' will more directly and properly express the inner being of the self than will other acts. Just so, all events are God's acts, but not all reveal God's Being (will, purpose, etc) in the special sense with which some acts do.

41a. To avoid the dilemma of imposing a limitation on God by speaking of the time prior to creation, Augustine enunciated the famous formula '*cum tempore non in tempore*'. Time is also the creation of God, along with the universe. Some philosophers, eg. C. A. Campbell in his illuminating *On Selfhood and Godhood*, suggest that time is contained within the being of God. "If God is perfect in Power...the time-order must be dependent upon Him, and His mode of being must be so understood that it not merely transcends but also somehow includes Time" (p. 265).

42. Urquhart (*The Vedanta and Modern Life* 1928, pp. 133-5) discussed the idea of *lilā* with considerable insight. He acknowledged that the concept "hints at ideas of considerable philosophical importance," and cites Lotze, Pringle-Pattison and Rabindranath Tagore by way of support. But he mistakenly concluded that the *Lilā*-notion is inseparably connected to the Advaitin's theory of illusion, and in Rāmanuja is quite 'disconcerting.'

43. This relates to the question of whether creation is necessary to God in an ontological sense. Spinoza's formula 'World minus God equals 0,' 'God minus world equals 0', and Hegel's maxim that the world is as necessary to God as God is to the world has been accepted by some of the Process

theologians. But to say that as creatures we cannot know the pure essence of God apart from his relations with creatures, or even that God always reveals himself as God-in-relation-to-the-world, is very different from saying that there is not, and cannot be any such transcendent, immutable, 'unrelated' nature. Temple's discussion of this issue is illuminating (*op. cit.* esp. 295-7). He wrote of an 'immanental adaptation' in which God transcends the process through which he expresses himself, by being 'eternally self-identical.' His immanental being is thus seen as definitive of his transcendent being.

44. SB I. 1.13ff. SB (T) pp. 209 - 234.

45. The first few pages of his *Sūtra-bhāṣya* make this clear.

46. *Sankara and Aquinas on Creation* (in *Indian Philosophical Annual*, Vol. VI, 1970, pp. 112 - 118.)

46a. See Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*, Part I, Question 3, article 7 (Also I. 4. 1 and I. 6. 2.): "God is altogether simple... There is no combination of quantitative parts in God, since he is not a body. Neither is there in God any composition of form and matter. Neither is there any difference between God's nature and God as subject, nor between his essence and his existence. Neither is there any composition of genus and difference. Etc." (Trans. by A. M. Fairweather, in *Nature and Grace*, Vol. XI in *The Library of Christian Classics*, London 1954).

47. *op. cit.* p. 118. De Smet has discussed this issue in other articles, in lecture notes and in his doctoral thesis, *The Theological Method of Sankara*.

48. Trans. by Swāmi Jagadānanda (Madras 1973).

49. Cf. Fr. E. Coplestone's statements: "The philosophy of St. Thomas is essentially realist and concrete. St. Thomas certainly adopts the Aristotelian statement that first philosophy or metaphysic studies being as being; but it is perfectly clear that the task he sets himself is the explanation of existent being, so far as this is attainable by the human mind. In other words, he does not presuppose a notion from which reality is deduced,

but he starts from the existent world and inquires what its being is, how it exists, what is the condition of its existence. Moreover, his thought concentrates on the supreme Existence, on the Being which does not merely possess existence, but is Its own existence, which is the very plenitude of existence, *ipse esse subsistens*. His thought remains ever in contact with the concrete, the existent." (*A History of Philosophy*, Vol. 2, Part II. New York 1962, p. 26) "One of the chief characteristics of St. Thomas' philosophy is its 'objectivity' rather than its 'subjectivity.' The immediate object of the human intellect is the essence of the material thing, and St. Thomas builds up his philosophy by reflection on sense-experience." (p. 28). "Owing to the fact that the human intellect is embodied, its natural and proper object, proportionate to its present state, is the corporeal object...insofar as material objects reveal the character of the Transcendent, the intellect can attain some knowledge of its nature." (p. 59)

50. As proposed by De. Smet in *The Correct Interpretation of the Definitions of the Absolute according to Śāṅkara and Saint Thomas Aquinas*.

51. Though the resemblance of finite to Infinite may properly be called 'remote' it is neither unreal nor insignificant.

52. We may note Aquinas' stress on the non-corporeality of God in *Summa Theologica* I. 3. 1 - 3.

53. *op. cit.*, pp. 84 - 7, also Chapt. 15.

54. *op. cit.*, pp. 77 - 81.

55. *Gitā-bhāṣya* on 8.14.

56. *op. cit.* on 7.18.

57. *op. cit.* on 9.29.

58. VS (VB) paras. 140 - 2.

59. It is true that some explanation has to be given for Rāmānuja's lack of clear reference to images. There are a few passages which suggest that he is indirectly describing the *arcāvatāras*. Eg. his comment on *Gitā* 4.11. And that

Rāmānuja himself was committed to and participated in *arca*-worship is abundantly clear. So his relative silence on the matter must result either from the lack of Vedic reference to *arca*-worship, or more likely because he "regarded the images as aids to meditation on the other forms of the Deity...It is obvious that his interest was in the supreme form of the Deity portrayed by the image." (Carman, *op. cit.*, p. 181). A similar explanation can be suggested for his lack of interest in the *vyūhas* and the more technical details relating to the *avatāras*. His principal interest was in the transcendent form of God. We may note that Rāmānuja did not describe the supreme form as composed of *śuddha-tattva* as did the later Vaiṣṇavas.

60. SB I. 1. 21.

61. SB (VB) paras. 127 - 136; *Gitā-bhāṣya*, Introduction, and comment on 6.47 and 9.34.

62. Eg. the *Gitā*'s introductory description: "Radiance, beauty, fragrance, tenderness, charm and youthfulness."

63. *Studies in Rāmānuja Vedānta*

64. *op. cit.* pp. 53 - 55.

65. *op. cit.* 173.

66. *op. cit.*, 174.

CONCLUSION

1. But cp. C. A. Campbell (*op. cit.*) who, while adopting a moderate, commonsense empirical standpoint, is able to write quite confidently and clearly about the characteristics of the self. Fr. M. D'Arcy (*No Absent God - the relation between God and the Self*) argues that loss of confidence about the self in Western thought corresponds to and is caused by loss of faith in God, the Supreme Self. Does 'atheistic' Buddhism's *anātma* doctrine confirm this opinion?

2. Eg. G. Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*.

3. Eg. Temple in *Nature, Man and God*.

4. H. Kraemer, the neo-orthodox missionary theologian, makes this his chief criticism of Rāmānuja (*The Christian*

Message in a Non-Christian World, 1938, pp. 169-171) First he admits that Rāmānuja "vindicated a really living God, not merely a theistic conception of God." Later he says that Rāmānuja's starting point was not faith in God the Creator, but a concern "to construe a satisfying relationship between the world and a personal God—which is a philosophical question." He also claims (mistakenly?) that Rāmānuja broke "in a radical way with the classical Hindu ideas about God, the soul and the world." But finally Kraemer rejects Rāmānuja's system precisely because "it is not really emancipated from the basic monism of Hinduism, and therefore neither from the anthropocentric and endomonistic tendencies that are inherent in this monism." Naturally Kraemer finds the idea of God as both efficient and material cause particularly objectionable, further confirmation that for Rāmānuja "the world is not God's creation." It is not easy to find such prejudicial distortion of Rāmānuja's position, nor such circular argumentation, as this. Urquhart (*Pantheism and the Value of Life*, 1919) also claimed that Rāmānuja's "doctrine of creation hardly reaches the theistic level" (p. 235). So Kulandran (*Grace: a comparative study of the doctrine in Christianity and Hinduism*): "God is never a real Creator in Hinduism. He always creates out of something." But Otto (*India's Religion of Grace*, 1930) compared, rather briefly, Rāmānuja's understanding of creation with the teaching of St. Paul that all things are *ex autou* (p. 39. n. 1). Ninian Smart also interpreted Rāmānuja's doctrine favourably: "The total instrumentality of the world to God's purposes amounts to a total causal dependence. And what more can the doctrine of creation offer?" (*The Yoga and the Devotee*, 1968, p. 114).

5. Cf. J. Macquarrie (*Principles of Christian Theology*, 1966, 200 ff), who points out that while the idea of emanation is virtually absent from the Bible, it was found to be necessary to balance the 'maker-metaphor' and was regularly used in Christian theology from the second century onwards.

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*Some select opinions on Yamuna's
Agama Pramanyam, Ramanuja Research Society*

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**YAMUNA'S AGAMA - PRAMANYAM or TREATISE ON
THE VALIDITY OF PANCHARATRA**, Sanskrit text and
English translation, by Dr. J. A. B. Van Buitenen, Ramanuja
Research Society, Madras-17, Pp. xx, 51, 80, 145.
Price: Lib. edn. Rs. 25/-

Yamunacarya (A. D. 915-1040) stands out as one of the most important exponents of the Vaisnavite cult of South India, and as one who prepared the ground for the codification of the Visistadvaita philosophy by his successor Ramanuja (A. D. 1017-1137). The task before Yamuna was plain, though arduous. He found that the tenets and practices of the Pancharatra Agama, the pivot of the Vaisnavite religion, was quite popular amongst the masses, but was being repudiated by the learned, as lacking in Vedic authority. This was a position which had to be countenanced effectively, if the creed was to have a firm foundation. The *Agamapramanya*, an excellent edition of which is reviewed here, forms Yamuna's effort in this direction.

Yamuna endeavours to achieve, through this work, two objectives: first, to affirm that the doctrines of the Agamas were within the orthodox tradition of the Vedas and Smrtis, and secondly to establish the scriptorial basis for Vasinavite Tantra in theory and practice. The great dialectician that he was, Yamuna has expounded his views in a most logical manner, quoting the Vedas, Brahmanas, Upanisads, Smrtis, Puranas, the *Brahmasutra* and the *Mahabharata*, in justification of his stand.

Inquisitive students of Indian culture will welcome this finely printed and got-up publication not only for placing in their hands the exposition of an important landmark in mediaeval Indian philosophic thought, but also for the lucid and very readable translation of that exposition which it contains. Both Dr. Buitenen and the Ramanuja Research Society deserve to be congratulated for the commendable work which they have done in making available to interested readers this classic of South Indian Vaishnavism.

Vishveshvaranand }
Indological Journal }

K. V. SARMA

SRI RANGANATHA PADUKA

YAMUNA'S AGAMA PRAMANYAM or TREATISE ON
THE VALIDITY OF PANCHARATRA: Sanskrit Text
and English Translation by Dr. J. A. B. Van Buitenen.
Published by Ramanuja Research Society, 7, Sarojini Street,
Madras-17. Library Edition Rs. 25/.

The Pancharatra Agama, also known as Bhagavat Sastra, and the 4,000 Hymns of the Alvars, known by the name of Divya Prabandham, are the two classes of spiritual literature which have been accepted by Sri Vaishnavas as of unquestionable authority even as the Vedas are. It must be known that this acceptance is not based on blind faith or predisposition, but is the result of critical examination and impartial reasoning. Sage Vedavyasa in his great epic, Mahabharata describes the Bhagavat Sastras as authoritative since their teachings are quite in accordance with the Vedas.

When the question of the authoritativeness of the Pancharatra is taken up for investigation in the Utpatyadhikarana of Pada ii of Chapter II of the Brahma Sutras, the other work of Veda Vyasa (Badarayana) the final view is declared that it is authoritative. But Sri Sankara, holding a different view argues: "the whole of the second Pada is devoted to the rejection of the systems of thought like Sankhya Yoga, Bauddha, Jaina and Pasupata—all of which are opposed to the Vedas and full of inconsistencies. From this it follows that the Pancharatra Agama also, which comes in the last Adhikarana of that Pada must be rejected for similar reasons. But this conclusion will go against the view of Badarayana, the author of the Brahma Sutras and also his declaration in the Mahabharata.

After the Brahma Sutras, the first available work on this subject is Agama Pramanyam of Sri Yamuna (Sri Alavandar) the book under review. In this work he first states in a fairly detailed manner the arguments of the *prima facie* view that the Pancharatra Agamas must be rejected since they are against the Sruti and Smriti as well as the practice of those learned in the

Vedas. Then he refutes the points of the opponents, one by one and establishes the authoritativeness of the Pancharatra Agamas giving his own arguments.

Next, Sri Yamuna takes up for discussion the four Sutras 39-42 of the Utpatyadhikarana (II-ii). He declares that the first two of the four Sutras represent the *prima facie* view, and the other two, the final view; and he interprets them accordingly furnishing the relevant authoritative texts in support. If we study the structure of the Sutras, it will be clear that the view of Sri Yamuna is correct. In this connection, it will be interesting to note that there is no word in the Sutras to indicate the Pancharatra Agamas. But both the opponents, Sri Sankara and Sri Yamuna are of the same opinion that the Adhikarana is devoted to the discussion of the validity of the Pancharatra Agamas though their conclusions are different—the former arguing for their rejection and the latter for their acceptance.

The Pancharatra Literature has an important place in, and is intimately connected with, the life of Sri Vaishnavas because of the treatment of the Doctrine of Saranagati or self-surrender as self-sufficient and independent means to Moksha, accessible to all irrespective of caste or rank, because of the five-fold division of the day with appropriate spiritual duties prescribed for each one of them, and also because of the concept of disinterested action. Another special feature of this Literature is the teaching of the Doctrine of the four-fold 'Vyuha', manifestation of the Lord—Vasudeva, Samkarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha—the construction of the Temples, the installation of the Deities and their worship and the conduct of festivals, daily, occasional, annual, etc.

This edition of Agama Pramanyam with Sanskrit Text and English Translation is a very welcome addition to the works on Visishtadvaita in English, which are rare. The works of Sri Yamuna have not been published and popularised so far, as they deserve to be, though they are held in great esteem by the later Acharyas. Sri Ramanuja and Sri Vedanta Desika quote from them, in their works, in support of their own views and the latter has also written an elaborate commentary on

two of them (Stotra Ratna and Chatussloki). While presenting his views in Agama Pramanyam, Sri Yamuna uses both prose and verse, and his language is simple and terse.

Prof. Dr. Van Buitenen has rendered invaluable service to Visishtadvaita by bringing out a critical edition of this masterpiece with a scholarly introduction and English translation, eminently readable and faithful to the original. Where the original is very succinct and appears difficult, the Professor adds his own explanation for the proper understanding of the argument. His introduction is very useful in which he traces the history of Pancharatra Literature and throws light on topics like Nathamuni and Yamuna, early Pancharatra, Pancharatra in the Brahma Sutras, Sankara and Bhaskara in the Brahma Sutras, and lastly Ramanuja on the Pancharatra. Prof. R. Ramanujachari has contributed a preface which is quite informative and gives, in some detail, the life and works of Sri Yamuna and of the special value of Agama Pramanyam in establishing the validity of Pancharatra.

I congratulate Sri V. Srinivasa Raghavan, Secretary of Ramanuja Research Society, for bringing out this valuable work in English for the first time, along with the Text. The printing and get-up are good and leave nothing to be desired.

Tirunelveli, }
12-1-1972

A. SRINIVASARAGHAVAN

Select Opinion on—Visishtadvaita-Philosophy and Religion—A symposium of Essays

By K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR M.A.D. LITT
Retired Vice-Chancellor, Andhra University

VISISHTADVAITHA PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

A Symposium by Twenty-four Erudite Scholars.

Ramanuja Research Society, T. Nagar, Madras-17

It is thanks to the sustained efforts of Sri V. Srinivasa Raghavan of Ramanuja Research Society that we have this collection of 31 papers on diverse aspects of Visishtadvaita by 24 eminent scholars of yesterday and today. The contributors include such well-known names as the late Justice V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar, A. V. Gopalachariar, Professors P. N. Srinivasachari, M. Yamunachari and K. R. Srinivasiengar, Dr. K. C. Varadachari and Swami Adidevananda, as also Agnihotram Ramanuja Thatachariar and Prof. K. Seshadri. And the subjects range from Ramanuja's life and ministry, expositions of Visishtadvaita in its historical, dialectical and practical aspects, comparative religion and philosophy, Visishtadvaita in relation to the Upanishads, the epics and the Vishnu Purana, and the significance of 'arca' and of Vedanta Desika's mnemonics as an aid to memory. An advantage of this collection is that there are essays for the general reader who is interested in Visishtadvaita, and there are also more specialist studies that may be deemed 'caviare to the general' but must make an undoubted appeal to the seasoned scholar.

Swami Adidevananda's brief account of Sri Ramanuja's life evokes the living image of the "Seraphic Saint", the Yatiraja, the chief engineer of the bhakti movement in medieval India. Gopalachariar's study of Sri Ramanuja's *Gadyatrayam* is preceded by S. V. Srinivasan's sensitive English rendering of

Saranagati Gadyam. 'Saranagati' is, indeed, the heart and soul of Visishtadvaita. Since human knowledge is limited, human life is short, it is to little purpose to contrive through mere human means as armour of self-protection. But Narayana is easy of access to all, and so man in his extremity, when all his defences are shattered, all his retreats are cut off, and all his self-assurance is gone, can only throw himself on the love and mercy and infinite benevolence of God, as the child falls on the mother's lap, as the baby-monkey clings to its mother, as the baby-cat is content to be seized and carried away by the mother-cat.

There are, of course, views of facets of Sri Ramanuja's system (his view of Jiva, of amsa, of Prakriti, of mukti, of Mayavada), and there are also comprehensive studies like V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar's opening essay. It is interesting that Sri Ramanuja himself should have referred to his siddhanta as 'Visishtadravya-aikya', and not as 'Visishtadvaita.' In his essay, Dr. V. Varadachari points out that the word occurs for the first time only in the writings of Sudarsanasuri in the 13th century and came generally to describe the Ramanuja School from the 16th century onwards. The difference, however, is only in the nomenclature, not in the content of the system. Historically, Sri Ramanuja Darsana is posterior to Sri Sankara's Advaita, and it was the compulsion of logic that in course of time the former came to be known as Visishtadvaita, as something of an evolutionary advance on Advaita. Sankara himself was partly a child of his time, and could not quite tear his eyes away from the unutterable Nihil of the Buddha's conception. But there was another Buddha too, the soul of compassion; and there was another Sankara as well, who let himself be lost in the bliss of Govinda and indited honey-sweet melodies to feast and enrapture the human ear and the deeper listening of the soul. As Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari limns the dual nature of Sankara :

"Sankara, as a practical idealist and theist, came to destroy the Buddhist philosophy of negation and agnosticism. Sankara the devotee of Vasudeva...who dedicated himself to world welfare is greater than the

Sankara the relentless dialectician who dismisses the world as evil, illusion or dream, and its Isvara as God for the deluded mind."

It was Ramanuja's destiny to redress the balance, and accordingly he made his 'darsana', not so much an arid metaphysical system, but a philosophy of religion, a philosophy that sought to explain in terms of reason the deep and abiding spiritual experiences of numberless Vaishnava mystics from very remote times indeed.

As V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar sees it, Visishtadvaita is "the yoga of the two opposing schools (Advaita and Dvaita) of Vedantic philosophy...A true Yoga must be the comprehension and synthesis of the whole of the one and the entirety of the other." If Sankara's position is to be described as "nihilistic" (and this is but partly true), then Ramanuja's is an "yes" philosophy, an integral philosophy. The world is real, the individual is real and Brahman (which is both the Absolute of philosophy and the God of religion) is real: The visible universe is *cit* and *acit*, both in a gross form; their originating sources are *cit* and *acit*, but in a subtle form; and in both forms, however, their Ground is Brahman, immanent in them. They keyword in Visishtadvaita is thus the concept of *saririn* :

"Brahman the *saririn* is metaphysically the ground of existents, morally their inner ruler, and aesthetically the beauty and bliss of life."

It is thus a "double-faced unity" that the concept of *saririn* postulates and thereby sums up the truths of metaphysics, ethics and aesthetics, and offers satisfactory answers to all the ultimate questions relating to *tattva*, *hita* and *purushartha*.

When the individual awakens to these ultimate truths, he inveterately seeks the Supreme, by whatever Name you may choose to call Him. But He too is in pursuit of the Jiva. He is verily the 'Hound of Heaven' pursuing the half-frightened soul to effect its total redemption. The conception of the "descent of God" into humanity—a descent concurrent with

the ascent of the human aspiration towards the godhead—is a characteristic feature of Ramanuja Darsana, and this is a significant anticipation of Sri Aurobindo's view :

“ There are two powers that alone can effect in their conjunction the great and difficult thing which is the aim of our endeavour, a fixed and unfailing aspiration that calls from below and a supreme Grace from above that answers.”

The soul hungers for the love of God, but the God of Love also likewise hungers for the love of the Jiva, and the seeming invisibles invade one another and culminate in Brahmananda or the ecstasy of the unitive experience. For achieving such *mukti*, Visishtadvaita outlines an elaborate method comprising jnana, karma and bhakti ; but there is also the infallible path of prapatti or saranagati or total surrender—even as Vibhishana threw himself in total surrender and trust at the feet of Ramachandra.

In Ramanuja Darsana, two potent streams of Indian culture met fruitfully and produced results that have endured to this day. The Northern Sanskrit was one of the streams, and the Southern Tamil culture was another : these living spiritual waters met in the Prayag of Visishtadvaita, or the Ubaya Vedanta.

Sri Ramanuja's is, in the final reckoning, a philosophy of hope abounding and abiding. In the words of V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar : “ Is there anyone who will not embrace, profess and cherish a religion and philosophy which promises the highest happiness, the Brahmananda, not merely in the life after death but also here and now ? ”

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